

GALUSHA A. GROW

Father of the Homestead Law

by JAMES T. DuBOIS *and*
GERTRUDE S. MATHEWS



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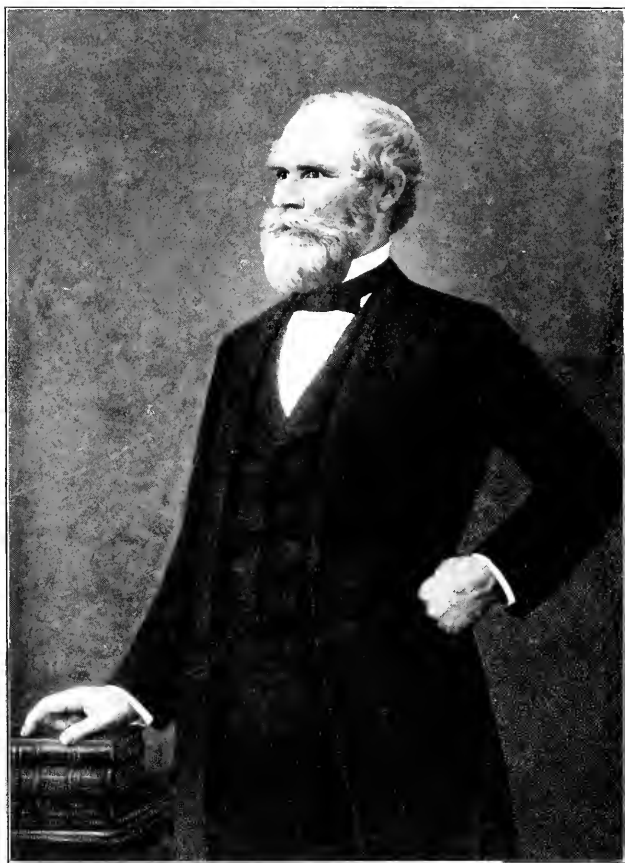
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GALUSHA A. GROW

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GALUSHA A. GROW

From the portrait presented to Congress by the State of Pennsylvania
and hanging in the Speaker's room in the Capitol

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BY

JAMES T. DuBOIS

AND

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“That country is greatest and most glorious in which there is the greatest number of happy firesides.”

To Andrew Carnegie's peculiarly discriminating appreciation of the worth of Mr. Grow and his work, a feeling he most generously demonstrated, is due much of the stimulus which led to the writing of this volume. When Mr. Grow planned his autobiography, undertaken too late to finish, he wrote:

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

TO

ANDREW CARNEGIE

Whose business life illustrates what a boy of good habits, without money or personal influence, can accomplish in industrial pursuits under our free institutions; and whose ideal of life is the highest and best, that the possessors of great wealth ought in their lifetime to contribute most of it to the welfare of mankind and beneficent public objects.

GALUSHA A. GROW

FOREWORD

THE definition of history as the biography of great men holds good in the land movement of the United States as elsewhere. Galusha A. Grow, Speaker of the House of Representatives in Lincoln's time, true statesman, patriot in so large a sense that to-day we are reaping a harvest which he helped to sow and largely cultivated, did human, historical work which should make him proportionately honored.

To his foresight and persistence we owe, in great part, the settlement of the Far West with genuine homes, the peopling of vast tracts with earnest homesteaders who could give that invaluable element, personal interest, to the task of breaking open the continent, and the retention to such people of a considerable part of the domain which, in 1850, was in so large a measure not only new possession but entirely unassimilated.

Having followed the politico-geographical principle that young countries know no exclusion from the sea,¹ the United States had

¹ Ratzel, *Politische Geographie der Vereinigten Staaten*.

pushed forward to dominion on the Pacific, completing a monumental expansion of our territory. Finding ourselves in possession of a folk-land of fabulous extent, the pressure for the formulation of some adequate land policy by which to assure to the nation its proper development had become active. There was imminent danger of monopoly, of disastrously lavish gift to railroads and other utilities, upon whose pleasure the country must then wait for a programme which would reasonably develop it without independent chance for the common man. Involved in the question of settlement, moreover, was the momentous issue whether the territory should be slave or free.

At this epoch, before the matter had become a party issue, Grow entered the arena of Congress, its youngest member. Land bills there had been in plenty, but ideas on the matter were conflicting and by no means clear and broad in principle. The free-grants plan had been launched on its course, but, while its prominent advocates in Congress had presented the idea in various ways, no plan was entirely compelling and all of them sharply controversial because of the half-developed

status of the Union and the more or less tentative condition of federal authority.

With an appreciation of the value of any man to the soil, with an instinctive feeling for the rights of man, and with the vision of superb empire compelling him, Grow took up the practical task of laying a comprehensive, stable foundation for a continental national life; and once assumed he never laid it down.

To the land he wished to secure the people. To invite them, inducement and protection were necessary. Legislation must be formulated which would prove a good investment alike for the nation and the individual. To that policy, for which he made a long and difficult fight extending over ten years' time, culminating in the successful passage of the Homestead Act in 1862 while he was Speaker, the nation owes much of its present stability.

A great labor, bearing the indelible imprint of the best spirit of our American times — the people of the country have not begun to realize how large a debt they owe to Galusha A. Grow for the basis of the successful development of a very great portion of our national estate. Obscured in the period of its accomplishment by an excitement so painful to us as a people that

other national policies than those most obviously connected with the Civil War were comparatively little heeded, it is important that new light be thrown upon the source of inspiration which lies in this conscientious, effective, and far-reaching labor. Because of the aid that this legislation has afforded to one of the greatest migrations that the world has seen, because of the direct connection between the land and our present prosperity, and because of the worth of the man who was so ready to give himself as the instrument of accomplishment, Galusha Grow's life, set in key with the most throbbing strains of our most dramatic period, is vital to America.

"The true patriot," says Henry van Dyke, "is he who is as willing to sacrifice time and strength and property to remove political shame and reform political corruption, as he who would be ready to answer the call of battle against a foreign foe. The true patriot is he who works and votes with the same courage he would show in arms, in order that the aspirations of a noble people may be embodied in the noblest rulers."

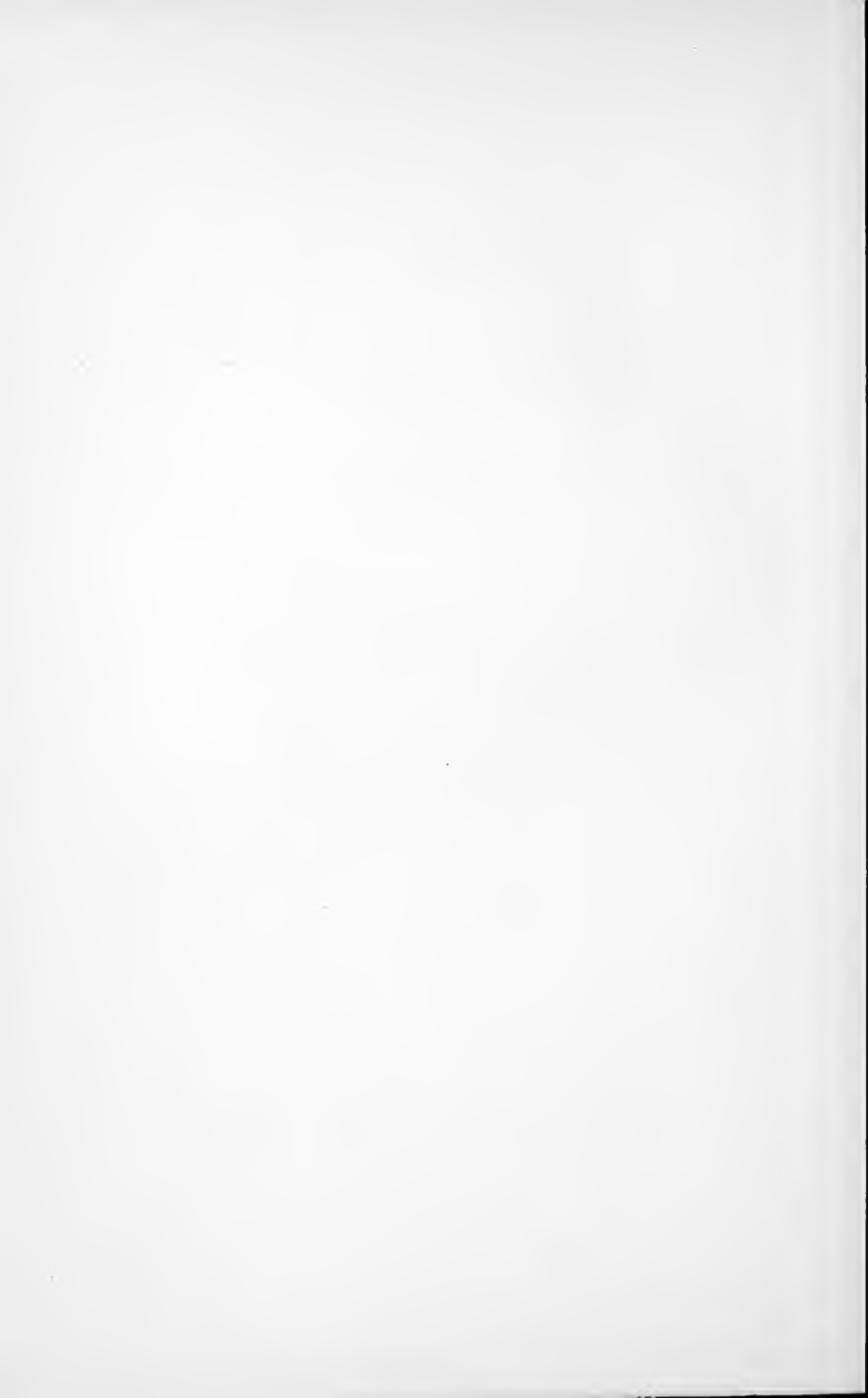
To make the great unoccupied commons of America a true free folk-land, to introduce

honest settlement on the heels of disastrous speculation and ineffective preëmption, Grow steadily gave himself with courage and persistence to a discouraging civil, economic task. In pursuance of the work which had fallen on his shoulders, he came into intimate contact with some of the greatest Americans of the climacteric period of our history.

In the following account we have endeavored to preserve, so far as possible, the direct personal style with which Mr. Grow narrated the incidents of his life, many of them told in the sunset years as he rested in his wicker chair on the great veranda of his home in Glenwood, Pennsylvania, or while reclining on the old-fashioned sofa in his room. He left behind him manuscripts and memoranda, notes biographical and historical, fugitive articles and fragments, which contain incontrovertible proof of lofty feeling and a simple ruggedness of character which should make his patriotic story suggestive, since they give direct testimony to the rise of a man who consistently followed the primeval impulse within him to its great ends of broad human benefit.

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GALUSHA A. GROW

CHAPTER I

EARLY YOUTH

THE event of birth is all too frequently insignificant. A pleasure to record where it is emphatically to the contrary, it must be set down that a son was born August 31, 1823, in Ashford, Windham County, Connecticut, to Joseph and Elizabeth Grow, great-great-grandchildren of that Grow, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, who in the sixteen hundreds was one of the "commoners" of the town.

About the time of the baby's christening an aunt who lived in Vermont was visiting his mother. The Christian name of her husband was Aaron. She was an admirer of Governor Galusha, of Vermont, and asked permission to name the child "Aaron Galusha," which was granted, and his weighty nomenclature was so recorded in the family Bible. The name of their nearest neighbor was also Aaron, however, and fearing that it might be thought that

the boy took his name from him, the family began calling him "Galusha." When he became ten years old it was sometimes necessary to write his name, and as it did not please them as "A. Galusha Grow," that being in their estimation hardly definite enough to designate any particular person, he began writing it "Galusha A. Grow" and continued it ever after.

When he was a little over four years old, his father died, leaving his mother with six children and property hardly sufficient to pay the debts. Of the children Julia was the eldest, being fifteen; then came Edwin, Frederick, Samuel, Galusha, and Elizabeth, who was only eighteen months old. Samuel went to live with "Uncle Thomas Grow" in Hampton. Galusha went with his uncle, Kinney Gallup, to his grandfather, Captain Samuel Robbins, in Voluntown, who was a soldier in the Continental Army and was among the first volunteers who went from Connecticut to Boston after the battle of Lexington.

His mother spent a few months in settling up her business affairs in Ashford and then went with the rest of her children to her father, Captain Robbins, where they spent seven

years. Edwin and Frederick worked on the farm doing heavy labor, while Galusha was general chore-boy, milking the cows and caring for the horses. At times he drove the oxen for Edwin to plough, rode the horse bareback in cultivating corn and potatoes, and attended school in winter.

The hotel at Voluntown was kept by Captain Robbins, and during his life and many years after it was the place for transacting all township business, the elections and meetings of the selectmen who had charge of town affairs being held there. The annual drill of the militia company of the township took place on a large meadow near the hotel, and the great day of the year for small boys and grown men was "Training-Day." Probably it was in this place that Galusha came to hear many tales of the Liberty Pole times of our forefathers, and the fact that he remembered them all his life makes the assumption warrantable that they must have instilled into his blood some especial interest in the idea of freedom, of revolt on principle, and of love for political action.

Early in the Revolutionary War Liberty Poles were first used, and closely following it

became the fashion of every village to have a "Pole-Raising" or "Training-Day." These events were popular with the farmers who came to such centers as Voluntown, driving for miles from all directions and in all kinds of vehicles from logging-wagons to Revolutionary coaches. More than one of the men gathered at Galusha's grandfather's inn remembered all the excitement of the origin of these poles, when "Citizen Genêt," Minister from France to our country, tried to fit out privateers from our ports and enlist men for expeditions against the Spanish territory. In America the Republicans, who were the American partisans of France, sympathized with his movements. When President Washington issued a proclamation in 1793 declaring the neutrality of the United States, more sympathy for Genêt's schemes was aroused, and Democratic Clubs set up Liberty Poles surmounted by flags bearing various inscriptions favorable to France.

To this tradition of that Training-Day which was so great a feature of Galusha's boyhood was added that of the revolt in western Pennsylvania against the excise law, when the red "Anarchy" or "Sedition Poles" were the distinctive emblems of a disturbance

which had to be suppressed by armed force of the Government. The fad, dying out about 1800, sprang to life again when the British lion began to growl. Later on, when Whigs and Democrats were in the midst of their bitterest contests, each party vied with the other in raising poles at their political meetings, and they were considered quite as essential to the success of the day as the speech-making. The party loyalty of a community came to be measured by the height of the pole. Very often sailors were brought from port towns far into the interior to help in "riggin'" the poles after they were raised. These jolly tars in their seamen's uniform were half the show, and they were lionized and bountifully entertained with applejack and pumpkin pie, and not infrequently with free whiskey and a free fight.

The masses of both parties had come to regard the emblem itself with a sort of superstitious awe, and to children like Galusha such superstition made of the Liberty Pole a mystic shrine. If these poles were such a rage that a mass meeting without one was to grown-ups like a schooner without a sail, imagine the scorn of a small boy who venerated his Liberty Pole as an Indian his totem! No political

demonstration in any era could have been finer to any small boy, and Galusha was a real boy.

The accompanying campaign disease known as the "campaign ditty" had its own delights, but it was by no means so compelling. Still, from the old men who congregated in the hotel and "reminisced," Galusha absorbed many an ancient verse. First used in Washington's campaign they had at this time none of the wit and bitterness which afterwards characterized them. The rancor of party feeling did not develop until almost 1800, and it was then that bitter partisanship began to express itself in political songs. One, dating from Jefferson's campaign against Adams, ran: —

"The Federalists are down at last,
The Monarchists completely cast,
The aristocrats are stript of power,
Storms o'er the British faction lower.
Soon we Republicans shall see
Columbia's sons from bondage free.
Lord! How the Federalists will stare
At Jefferson in Adams' chair!"

Perhaps Mrs. Grow feared the influence of the inn for her children; certainly Galusha was "taking in" a good deal for his age. For various reasons in the winter of 1833-34, she con-

cluded that it would be better for them to go West and grow up with the country. Orrin S. Kinney, who married Galusha's sister Julia, had the winter before gone out to eastern Pennsylvania to found a home. He bought a tract covered with heavy timber in Greenfield, about four miles from Carbondale, and began cutting a fallow of five acres, expecting his wife to join him in the spring. When Mrs. Grow consulted her father about going West he agreed that before she departed she should receive the portion of the property which he had allotted to her in his will.

The same winter Charles Barstow and Samuel Newton, who were living near Voluntown, went to northern Pennsylvania, or "up-country" as it was then called, to establish new homes. Barstow bought the Crystal Lake Hotel property, about two miles from Dundaff in Susquehanna County, and Newton purchased a farm on the Milford and Owego Turnpike, three miles out of Montrose, and were to take possession the next spring. On their return to Connecticut they chartered a sailing vessel on Long Island Sound engaged in trade between New London and New York, to take their families to Rondout on the

Hudson River as soon as the Delaware and Hudson Canal was open.

Hearing that Mrs. Grow was going to move "up-country," they came to Voluntown to see if it would suit her to go on the sailing vessel they had chartered. She accepted the offer, and the last of April, 1834, the three families gathered together their household effects, put them aboard the little ship *Mystic*, nearly opposite New London, and commenced their journey through Long Island Sound. Mrs. Grow took with her Julia, Edwin, Elizabeth, and Galusha, and after five days, having stopped in New York one day to make some purchases, the *Mystic* arrived at Rondout. There everything was transferred to a flatboat on the Delaware and Hudson Canal, the first one to make the spring trip to Honesdale, in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, which was the end of their water route. They were detained one day at Port Jervis by a break in the canal, and it took them five days to reach Honesdale, where their goods were transferred to wagons drawn by two-horse teams.

Then the journey overland was begun. One can see the small boy of ten, his ardent imagination all astir, facing the great, wide

mysterious West which stretched before them in interminable reaches, full of unexplored wild resources. The excitement of an adventure journey of magnitude into that mountainous country which, although pioneered long before, from its obstinacy to subjugation had still the character of real wilderness, must, to judge by later developments, have transcended all ordinary, childish excitement and touched that Great Wonder, the experience of which is so valuable an asset to any human life.

By sea four days, a twenty-four hour space in that New York whose remote edge was Twenty-third Street, a canal-boat journey which meant slow, dreamy days in a unique environment on a placid water, and then the beginning of a caravan movement, painful and snail-like, toward that corner of the globe where the Creator, when He made the earth, seems to have dumped the leavings in a picturesque manner — this was such a romance as one remembers throughout one's journey down the life-path.

“A mover up-country!” — the phrase must have been magic to a small boy. With nomadic instinct keenly alive as he bumped along the

uneven roads to the new country in whose vague area they were to find themselves a home, he could not escape the lure of migration. Such experiences leave deep roots in the sensitive, romantic minds of children. Galusha was part of a greater movement than he could possibly know, a migration which had in it sweeping, elemental forces. Probably conscious only of the keenest interest in the adventurous advance of his own people inland, in the natural resources, he really received on this pilgrimage a *motif* for a life-work which tied him even thus early to a Cause. It was given to him to perceive the glamour of the new land and the inherent hardship of its conquest at that period when youth moves mountains by a wave of the hand, seeing its high vision with the clarity of reality.

The mother, whose resolution and vigor, whose good sense and ability took her out to battle with the primitive for the good of her children, inspired by that touch of altruism which often makes the ordinary homestead so poignantly appealing, demonstrated her brave nobility. Alone in her responsibility, even the pilgrimage must have been an appalling task, and with the handicap of limited

resources the establishment of a new home demanded fortitude, efficiency, and courage of the highest order. When she came to the enchanting Tunkhannock Valley, the settlers were building log huts out of the tall pine and hemlock trees which surrounded them on all sides. Trails, often only blazed ones, struck through the dense and far-reaching woodland to the gristmill, the post-office, and the blacksmith shop. Usually in such settlements was found a small store containing general merchandise.

Mr. Barstow went to his purchase at Crystal Lake. Mr. Newton took his family to his farm near Montrose. "Sister Julia" and her husband went to Greenfield. Mrs. Grow, having no abiding-place, deposited her belongings in the barn of Ephraim Johnson, who lived on a farm midway between Crystal Lake and Dundaff. Mr. Johnson had been her neighbor in Connecticut, and at his invitation they remained in his house while his son drove Edwin Grow around the country to procure a suitable homestead.

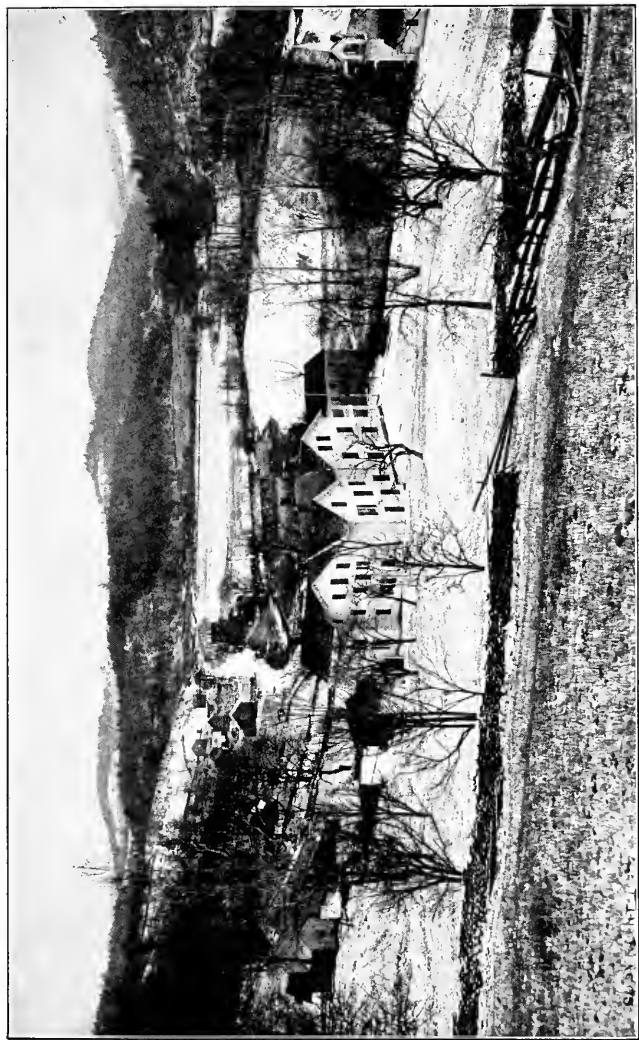
After driving for three days, a farm of four hundred acres was purchased of Solomon Millard for twelve hundred dollars, in the

valley of the Tunkhannock Creek at a hamlet called Glenwood, located about sixteen miles from the junction of the creek with the Susquehanna and four miles from the post-office. The nearest store was at Dundaff, eight miles away.

Edwin and Galusha were the farmers. The only stock they had on the farm that summer was one cow and a yoke of oxen. They sowed a field of oats and planted some corn and potatoes, borrowing a plough and harrow from their neighbor, William Hartley. One day, as Galusha went to get the plough for the third time, Mr. Hartley said, "I will lend you anything on my farm this season, but next year I will neither borrow nor lend!" They heeded this warning with care.

In that year¹ the wild pigeons nested on Elk Mountain, the highest elevation in northeastern Pennsylvania, and they were very destructive to the fields of oats and corn for a radius of twenty miles. In the day they passed from their mountain roost to their feeding-grounds like a dark cloud covering the sun. At night the farmers for miles around drove to the roosting-place and with long poles

¹ Mrs. Blackman, *History of Susquehanna County*.



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THE GROW HOMESTEAD AT GLENWOOD, PENNSYLVANIA

struck down thousands of pigeons, and carrying wagonloads home, salted them for winter use. The "Volunteer," a newspaper published at Montrose, referring to the great pigeon invasion, said: "They occupied a district nine miles long and two miles wide, every tree and branch of which was crowded with pigeons, and while these pests feasted on the farmers' fields the farmers returned the compliment by feasting on them."

During that same summer and autumn they practically destroyed all the grain crops in the region surrounding Elk Mountain except where the farmers were vigilant in protecting their fields. Galusha's mother assigned him to a post upon the ridge of a barn shed which stood in the cornfield, and his business was to sing songs, giving loud cat-calls or Indian whoops, and rattling sticks on the shingles to scare away the hungry winged robbers and prevent them from lighting in the fields. He held this post from the time the corn was planted until it was harvested, and he was always at his station from daylight until dark. A constant guard was necessary, as in a few hours' time a swarm of pigeons, if undisturbed, would destroy a good-sized field of grain.

The winters of 1834-37 Galusha went to the district school about a mile distant, and he always after mentioned with particular pleasure the spelling-bees in which not only the scholars but parents were participants. These contests called for "choosing sides," and the people from the various school districts would gather at the log school and fight out their battles in words. In this old building Galusha first took part in debate.

"I often prepared myself, while walking over a mile twice a day to fodder the cattle," he notes, "to argue whether the hen that hatched or the hen that laid the egg was the mother of the chick," and subjects of like importance. Sometimes the question debated was of a political character, and in these contests he became deeply interested. The questions to be discussed were announced by the teachers a week ahead, and it was there he learned the art of "talking on his feet."

In August, 1834, Frederick, who had been left at Voluntown to close up business and dispose, so far as possible, of the land Captain Robbins had conveyed to his mother, came to Glenwood, and soon thereafter Mrs. Grow, having decided that there was a good opening,

set apart one room in the farmhouse for a general store. Business flourishing, a building of three rooms was erected the following spring to accommodate the increasing trade. Frederick took charge of the store and made Galusha clerk. They traded groceries and cotton goods for butter, bark, and hides, and, the business prospering, branched out into "lumbering" as it was called in those days. They handled a large amount of "sawed lumber" which they floated down the Tunkhannock to the markets scattered along the Susquehanna River.

At fourteen years of age Galusha took his first trip down the river to Columbia. It took about five days to make it, and all through the journey they lived in a rough cabin on the rafts and slept in straw bunks, cooking their own meals and doing the "housework" themselves, as no women were on board. At Marietta the up-river pilots and most of the men returned home and new pilots and crews ran the raft on to Port Deposit.

Galusha made several of these trips with Frederick as far as Marietta and Columbia, but did not go "all the way through" — so they spoke of going to Port Deposit — until

the spring freshet of 1837. Then, with Frederick, he made the long journey clear to the Port, which was at the head of navigation on Chesapeake Bay, where lumber merchants from Baltimore and Philadelphia came to purchase supplies for their customers. At that time Port Deposit was the center of distribution of all lumber that came down the Susquehanna River and was a very interesting and busy place. Galusha enjoyed his sojourn there in full measure. All these practical experiences, while stimulating to the imagination, helped to transmute fancy to definite utilitarian power.

The panic of 1837, the year Martin Van Buren assumed the Presidency, caused a severe depression in business, and the lumber business being dull, lumbermen became impatient and sacrificed their stock at low prices. Two men, Horace G. Phelps, uncle of William Walter Phelps, who lived in Dundaff, Pennsylvania, and Benajah Bailey, of Painted Post, New York, were largely engaged in lumbering on the Tioga Branch of the Susquehanna near Corning, New York, and had a big stock of pine and hemlock at Port Deposit. When Frederick and Galusha reached that place with

their raft, Mr. Bailey asked Frederick to let Galusha take charge of a vessel loaded with lumber and go down the Bay and find as good a market for it as he could. Frederick told him that Bailey wanted him to go and sell the lumber. Galusha demanded, "Go where?"

Frederick replied, "Go until you sell it, if you have to go to Norfolk or Richmond, and then meet me in Baltimore with the cash."

Galusha accepted the proposition "so quick it made Frederick stare, as he thought it was too big a task for a boy of fourteen."

When the vessel was ready, Mr. Bailey said to him: "Galusha, you are supercargo of this ship, and you may sell the lumber at any price you think best; but sell. If you want to consult the captain about anything, do it, as he has sense and is my friend."

Unafraid to tackle anything, venturesome but by no means reckless, with a few dollars in his pocket, he started on his voyage into veritably unknown waters and strange lands. Arriving at Annapolis he went ashore in search of a buyer. He went into the office of a general merchant by the name of Adams, who agreed to buy the cargo at a fair price. As Galusha

passed out of the place, in high spirits, Adams suddenly changed his mind and called him back, saying he would not buy. Galusha was provoked at this commercial looseness and left without saying a word. He had respect for adherence to a promise given.

A man he met on the street told him that a gentleman named Claude, who was not a dealer in lumber, but who owned a plantation on an inlet a few miles from Annapolis, wanted some lumber. He went in search of Claude, finding him behind the counter in a small store, a sharp-featured man with a sandy complexion.

Galusha stepped up to him and inquired, "Do you want my pine lumber?"

Claude looked at him as though he thought Galusha ought to be in a kindergarten. Finally he demanded, "Where are you from?"

He told Claude that he had come from northeastern Pennsylvania on a raft, which seemed to puzzle him. Being very curious, Claude put the boy through a thorough catechism about his family and business. Galusha replied briefly, cautiously, quite holding his own under interrogatory fire.

At last Claude made reply to his first ques-

tion. "I want fifteen thousand feet of pine boards for my plantation."

"That would only take half my cargo," protested Galusha. "I do not want to sell half of it, for if I must go farther to sell the rest I might as well go with a whole load as a half."

Claude refused to buy it all, so Galusha started again in pursuit of a buyer. On the street he met a kindly faced old man and told him he had a shipload of lumber to sell. He stared at the boy in surprise, but seeing he was serious, told him that a man named Carter down on the Patuxent River wanted lumber for a large tobacco barn. It was twenty miles to Carter's.

Galusha hired a saddle-horse at the livery stable and started for the Carter plantation, reaching it just after sundown. He found Mr. Carter in shirt-sleeves, standing in his front door.

"Do you want a shipload of lumber?" asked Galusha.

His answer seemed to stop the boy's heart. "I bought all I need this morning."

Galusha turned to go, but Mr. Carter kindly insisted that he should spend the night under

his roof. For the first time he realized the meaning of Southern hospitality, for Mr. Carter and his family were very gracious to him. During the evening he told Galusha that the year before he had purchased a large supply of pine from William Hartley, who was a neighbor of the Grows at Glenwood. He at once felt that he was not entirely among strangers.

He returned to Annapolis in the morning, leaving the livery stable with the intention of seeing Mr. Claude again. He met Mr. Adams on the street, who said, "Young man, I have changed my mind; I will take the entire cargo."

"No, Mr. Adams," Galusha replied, "you backed out of your first bargain, and I do not care to trade with a man who won't stand up to his agreement." He left Adams staring with surprise.

Galusha went to Mr. Claude, who had treated him with kindness, and told him about Adams. Mr. Claude proposed that he would take half and let Adams have the other half and so dispose of it without further expense. Galusha objected: "Adams made a bargain with me for all of it and balked, and I never did like balky horses." But Mr. Claude urged

him to do as he proposed, and while it hurt his dignity, the boy finally agreed. He was already experienced enough in trading to know when to compromise, having developed considerable acumen.

Adams wanted just half the cargo, and Galusha requested him to have an inspector ready to count it. When Adams came to pay, he offered Galusha a check, but the boy wanted cash or nothing. Adams flushed and protested, "Do you want to come some Yankee trick on me?"

"No," the boy retorted, "and I don't propose to let you come any on me!"

This seemed to please the older man and he sent a messenger to the bank for the cash. "When he handed it to me," writes Mr. Grow, "I put it in my purse with the money received from Claude, pinned it tight in my pocket with three pins, and started, with happy heart, to deliver the rest of the lumber to Mr. Claude at the plantation." Claude insisted that Galusha and the captain take dinner with him and afterwards took them out to look at his plantation.

The slaves were cradling wheat. It was the first time the boy had seen slaves at work.

After they had left, the captain remarked, "I don't suppose people up your way think much of slavery." Galusha told him soberly that they did not like it and that "some day" they were going to see the end of it.

To this he replied with a robust oath, "Not by a damn sight."

"You wait," retorted Galusha, pretty hot, "and you'll see the sight all right and some of the damn with it!"

Elated by his luck, he caught the boat for Baltimore. Getting in early next morning, he found Frederick and Mr. Bailey at the hotel waiting for him. He proudly turned over the cash. Mr. Bailey, who had almost come to the conclusion that he had made a mistake in not keeping all the lumber together at Port Deposit, was so pleased with the lad's stewardship that he rewarded him more liberally than he had expected. It was the first money Galusha had ever earned, and he exclaimed exuberantly to Frederick, "I might as well spend some of this 'Red Dog' before the banks break! I am going to Mount Vernon."

Frederick had to remain in Baltimore for several days to finish his lumber deals, but Galusha took the first Baltimore & Ohio train

for Washington and reached it just in time to catch the boat for Alexandria. He was full of a boy's tender feeling for heroes. First thing next morning he walked to Washington's tomb, reaching Mount Vernon at eleven o'clock. In the flower garden back of the mansion he met an old colored man and told him he had come from northern Pennsylvania on a raft and had walked from Alexandria to see Washington's grave.

The old negro was greatly impressed. "Chile, dat is de mos' wonderful thing dat ebber happened!" he commented, and pulling a bunch of flowers, asked questions about the trip. After visiting the mansion, where Galusha saw the mementoes of Washington, the old man took him to the tomb. As they approached it he took off his hat. The boy, quick to reverence, followed his example with democratic simple-heartedness, and they both stood speechless, vibrating with the present power of past great deeds.

When they turned away, the old man broke the silence for the first time since reaching the sacred spot. "Dar am just two pussons I'se got a pow'ful respec' fur. One lies in dat marble s'cofagus and de udder 'spired on de cross!"

Then Galusha, in contemplative mood, started on his way back to Alexandria. As they parted at the gate his venerable guide gave him a farewell which seems to have added the finishing touch to the lad's sense of adventure. "God bress you, my sailor boy, and keep you from harm."

Sailor boy! "I would have walked a hundred miles for such a sojourn as I had in that beautiful place with that kindly old guide!" Grow set down seventy years afterward.

The next day he spent in Washington, visiting the Capitol, Navy Yard, and Patent Office, and finally went to the White House to see President Van Buren. He rang the bell and told the guard he wanted to talk with the President.

"What do you want of him?" the guard demanded.

Galusha answered ingenuously, "I just want to see what a real live President looks like and hear him talk."

The guard smiled. "The President has gone to Sharon Springs, but you may go through the public rooms and out into the park."

Disappointed, he took what comfort he could in the glories of the Mansion, and then

went down Pennsylvania Avenue. There the most conspicuous conveyance he saw was a rickety old omnibus which plied between the Navy Yard and Georgetown, and as it rattled over the uneven cobblestone pavement it made a noise like musketry fire. Over the Tiber, which was called "Good Creek" before the city was founded, was a wooden wicket bridge, and the houses along the avenue looked shabby even to a boy from the backwoods. As he passed along the thoroughfare he saw a group of slaves, men, women, and children, roped together, driven by a man holding a long whip. He would now and then snap it over their heads with a report like a pistol shot. He did not strike any of the slaves, but he seemed skillful at making the snapper crack, and cracked away sinisterly as he hurried the drove on toward the Capitol. Galusha remembered what he had said to the captain on the Baltimore steamer and hoped that his prophecy would come true at an early date.

He left for Baltimore not much impressed with the capital of his country, especially because of the slave incident, and after spending two days in the "Monumental City," with Frederick he started upon the long journey

home. They crossed the Susquehanna River at Havre de Grace on a ferry-boat, and went through Philadelphia on an omnibus line from Pine Street Depot and sailed up to Bordentown, taking a train from there for New York City.

From New York they traveled a night and two days by stage over the Milford and Owego Turnpike to Lenox Corners, which was four miles from home. They made this distance on foot, thus completing a journey occupying seventy-five hours.

“It took me a month to stop talking about the trip, and the boys of my acquaintance thought I had been pretty nearly around the world. I felt that I was a traveled young man in every sense of the word!” Mr. Grow records. The great event at that time in the life of a boy living in the region surrounding the head waters of the Susquehanna was a trip down the river on a raft “clear through.” As he had not only gone “clear through,” but miles and miles beyond, to the tomb of Washington, he had no rivals among the boys of northeastern Pennsylvania, and consequently stood unique and secure in his proud fame.

Characteristic reflection and laconic humor, for which he must have had need, by no means deadened the romance which at this period held him by the throat. The ingenuousness with which he made his advances upon life might have seemed sheer audacity had he been pretentiously knowing. His transparent innocence displayed his sincerity and direct motives. His experiences were his treasures, joyfully prized. His tentative traits showed a personality which later, full blown, was to become superbly sound and effective.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION AND FORMULATING PURPOSES

IN this period of his contacts with individuals in the mountains who were dealing with primitive tasks, where only by the toil of settlers any advance was made, the boy saw the worth of people and how yearningly interminable acres awaited the application of human power. The appeal of land, the great resource, the touchstone of humanity, held him. Equally gripping was the appeal of the needy worker who turned his all into virgin land and fought valiantly for its productiveness. Passing along the rude trails he watched the hard labor of settlers trying honestly to acquire their homes against tremendous odds. Too often they were endeavoring to support their families while paying off the land-shark, some speculator who perhaps had never left the confines of the city, but had secured title at abnormally cheap rates and had resold at a price frequently three hundred per cent on his investment.

The land-shark's only claim to the soil was

that he had paid a pittance to the surveyor and axeman to blaze a line through the forest in addition to a meager sum paid to the State for a patent. Securing advantageous locations and exploiting them, he victimized those who should have been protected, made huge profits upon his sharp business, and put upon the home-maker a burden heavier than he should have been allowed to bear.

Grow then began to perceive what later came to such rich fruition: the idea that a man who gives his heart to work which brings such results to the nation as the homesteader does has earned title to that homestead. Some dim dream stirred him of a miracle for America which might be followed by the provision of homes for all who came. He could not foresee that this feeling born in him would lead to his own good work in the world, nor realize that the acceptance of such perceptions as his firing-line in the battle of progress frequently brings a man to his best effectiveness; but the current of life forces caught him at this point, to carry him steadily onward.

His mother showed an especially strong love for him. "Boy Galusha!" she called him, and felt perfect assurance that his understanding

of her mood would be comprehensive. The days were busy with the manifold activities of their several enterprises. To the store and the lumber had been added the collection of neighborhood cattle and driving it to market; and finally Mrs. Grow, always ambitious, had added a gristmill to the other concerns. In the evenings the family gathered in the warm kitchen to talk over the incidents in their business — perhaps the next trip down to New York with their cattle, or of receipts from the mill, the state of crops, stock for the store, or the best ways of handling trade. “They were all in a pile!” according to the homely neighborhood phrase for a family which had common instead of separate business interests.

Frederick had a good deal to say in these evening conferences, Sammy less, and Edwin, even then, little indeed. Mrs. Grow was the family manager. She settled affairs. She commonly sat on the step which led down into the kitchen, paring apples as she talked — apples were plenty and they consumed, as every country family does, unending quantities. It was an evening job to prepare them and Galusha sometimes helped. When it was

done and business settled, Mrs. Grow frequently told ghost stories, or merry tales. With her good strong muscle she even personally attended to playful boyish ebullitions of strength, and usually put the lad on his back on the floor. If her industry was endless, her common sense unusual, and her spirit firm, it is certain that her love of fun was very deep. In this homely comradeship of the evenings the mother had enjoyment, and the sons no small part of their character training.

One day, in the spring of 1838, Mrs. Grow had Frederick hitch up. When she was seated in the carriage she called Galusha to her.

"I am going to Harford to make arrangements for you and Elizabeth to attend Franklin Academy this year," she told him. "I want you to go through college and study law and be one of the smartest lawyers there is in the State!"

It was characteristic of Mrs. Grow to say nothing until her decision was about to be consummated in an act. Galusha was strangely moved; he had never hoped to go to college, but he was instantly settled in the pursuit of his life. He had habitually followed his mother's advice, a fact to which he felt, in

his mellow later years, that he was indebted for whatever success he had been fortunate enough to achieve. A week afterwards he began a course at the Academy, boarding at Mrs. Walker's, the mother of Governor Walker, of Virginia, who resided a mile from the school. Previously his education had been confined to a few months of district school each year. He continued at the Franklin Academy until the spring of 1840, and the following summer he studied Greek under William Richardson, son of Preston Richardson, the former principal, who died shortly after Galusha entered the institution.

In September, 1840, Galusha entered the freshman class at Amherst. It was to cost him "all told" four hundred dollars a year during his college life. That amount seemed very extravagant to the family and neighbors, and he could never make them fully understand why living at Amherst was so much more than living at Glenwood. The selection of this college was controlled by the fact that William S. Tyler, who was from Harford and had fitted in part for college at Franklin Academy, was then a well-known professor of Greek and Latin at Amherst. Galusha was to get ready

for his study of law, but he also determined, on the advice of his mother, to have a practical craft, and studied surveying.

There were no gymnasiums at the college in those days, and each student looked out for his own physical exercise in his own way. Galusha's athletic practice consisted of cutting eight-foot wood into two-foot lengths, and carrying them up two flights of stairs to be used in an open fireplace which was supposed to warm his room.

"I have never been able to figure out just how such a small fireplace could eat up such a large amount of wood and throw off such a small amount of heat," he used to say afterwards. "I have concluded that it must have been the exercise of sawing and carrying that kept me from freezing to death. Aside from this effort, Professor Hitchcock, who had the chair of geology, took the class on extended excursions along the Connecticut River, and as another form of athletics he suggested the organization of a military company, which was got up at once; and to my surprise, I was elected captain."

The year he went to Amherst Grow was only seventeen. Still, he took a deep interest in

what was probably the greatest of all political contests, because it marked the awakening of a new political consciousness in the people, the Harrison-Van Buren fight. It plunged the country into immense excitement. Texas had applied to Congress for annexation. The South demanded it for slave purposes; the North opposed it on the same grounds. Grow's sympathy was with the Democratic Party, but with that faction which was against the expansion of slavery. A number of incidents which occurred about that time had stirred him very much.

A feeling of resentment had been roused against the pro-slavery men of the North for the acts of brutality they inflicted upon those interested in limiting the slave business to territory then occupied by the serf system. William Lloyd Garrison, who belonged to the radical wing of the abolitionists, had been dragged through the streets of Boston with a rope around his body, and had been rescued by the police and thrown into jail to save him from the mob. He believed in the right of every innocent being to equal freedom with every other, and refused to support any other view even by implication. The South would

not tolerate him, and Southern sympathizers in the North made his life a devil's rest.

Another outrage occurred in a hall in Philadelphia where some anti-slavery women had met. A mob stoned the building and finally burned it to the ground. In New Hampshire and Connecticut, schools for colored children were destroyed by pro-slavery men. At Alton, Illinois, some time before, Elijah Lovejoy, brother of Owen Lovejoy, later a friend and political adherent of Mr. Grow's, was murdered by a mob of Southern sympathizers.

"These and many like incidents drove me into the anti-expansionist Democratic Party of the North," he once said.

At this period the country was in the throes of a great business depression, and Martin Van Buren's administration was blamed for the condition of affairs. The new Whig Party, which sprang from opposition to President Jackson's economic principles as well as his so-called "executive usurpation," had deep vitality. The hero of Tippecanoe, William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, who had defeated the Indian chief Tecumseh thirty years before, caught the fancy of the people, who became enthusiastic — not to say hilarious — on the

subject of an entirely democratic candidate. Tyler, "pro-slave and then Whig," was a good running-mate. Extremes of protest against Van Buren, charged with being an aristocrat, made the supporters of Harrison claim, as though it were heroic, that Harrison had lived in a log cabin and subsisted on hard cider.

Imagine a more thrilling time to have been caught by the great game of politics than that year, when the country began to be torn by strong factional strife! Any and every boy must have rejoiced in the spiciness of that "hurrah campaign," and enjoyed the jokes and spirited fire of spontaneous songs. Certainly Mr. Grow cherished the memory of some of them ever after; perhaps the choicest, the first sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," being the following: —

"That Matty loves the workingman
No workingman can doubt, sir,
For well he doth pursue the race
To turn the workers out, sir!

"He turns them out of Whig employ
He turns them out of bread, sirs.
The middlemen he doth annoy,
By striking business dead, sirs!

“For Matty is a Democrat —
Sing Yankee Doodle Dandy!
With spoons of gold and English coach
And servants always handy!”

The other ran: —

“What has caused the commotion, ’motion, ’motion
Our country through?
It is the ball a-rolling on, for Tippecanoe and Tyler too!
And with them we shall beat Van.
Van, Van, the used-up man!

“Let them talk about hard cider, cider, cider,
And log cabins too —
It will only speed the ball for Tippecanoe and Tyler too.
Van, Van, Van
You’re not our man!”

In spite of his Democracy, it was obvious that Grow could not have lived through an hour so critical to his growth, when the cry was “Land! Land!” always “More land!” without having his sensitiveness to the subject, already deep, greatly quickened. With the appreciation of what opportunity our agricultural land offered, with an instinctive sympathy for the earnestness with which our young nation was pushing out tendrils of settlement toward the West, it is to his honor that he preferred to oppose the annexation of territory unless it could be free soil. Perhaps

the very gap between his own impulse and the party's stand for acquisition, coupled with slavery, gave a final fascination to candidates and their policies.

At any rate, he kept closely in touch with the political situation. He watched the Creole case with much interest when it came up in 1842, when Giddings offered a series of resolutions in the House claiming that the States had never delegated their jurisdiction of the slave question to the National Government, that slavery was an abridgment of a natural right and could only exist by positive law, and that a United States vessel on the high seas is under United States and not state jurisdiction. The debate on these resolutions became so threatening that the majority of the House, under slave domination, brought the discussion suddenly to an end and voted a censure upon Giddings for introducing the subject, a censure so severe that he was forced to resign his seat. His Ohio constituents immediately reelected him with direct instructions to present the resolutions again. During the negotiations of the arbitration treaty the matter was disposed of satisfactorily to both Governments and the excitement died out.

Such matters stimulated Grow to take part actively in the political discussions at Amherst and he made his maiden speech in the Polk-Clay campaign. He had studied carefully the platform adopted by the Whigs (1844) and decided it meant everything or nothing: Henry Clay was the Whig nominee; annexation of Texas was the prime topic of the hour, partly due to Tyler's forcing it. Clay was supposed to be against the project and the Liberty Party refused to endorse him, selecting J. G. Birney the second time as their candidate. Grow's natural sympathy in the matter, despite his aversion to slavery, led him to stand with Polk.

His stanch forthrightness in his undergraduate years was very marked. A classmate wrote thus amusingly of him in an article published in the "Hampshire Gazette": "Like Galileo, whom he personated in a commencement colloquy, Grow would boldly set forth in the face of the world a new system if satisfied of its truth, but not like Galileo would he recant, for fear had no place in his vocabulary." His fellows predicted that he would be in Congress five years after his graduation. He finished college satisfactorily but not

brilliantly, a good surveyor, a good speaker, a good thinker, albeit not strikingly original. At commencement he delivered an oration on "Moral Mobocracy."

His confidence at this time seemed unshakable, but it arose from the ability he had acquired to meet everything as it came. His sources of strength were those of the plain people. From the time he milked the cows of his maternal grandfather in Connecticut to the time he entered Amherst he had lived the simple life of a boy whose lot is the wilderness and whose abiding-place is such an isolated farm — conditions which seem not infrequently to produce Americans of great worth.

The day after his graduation he started for home. At Springfield, Massachusetts, there was a great throng of people, and hearing that there was to be a rally to ratify Henry Clay's nomination for President, he could not resist the temptation to stop over and hear the "Big Three," Daniel Webster, Rufus Choate, and Horace Greeley, who were to speak.

"I listened in breathless admiration to those great men, and their words inspired me with an irresistible desire to take part in the campaign," he acknowledges. "The rounded and majestic

periods of Webster, the concise and logical statements of Choate, contrasted strangely with the fierce, sledge-hammer blows which the great editor launched at the platforms and policies of his opponents."

So interested was he that he entered actively into the campaign as soon as he reached home, making his first speech from the south end of the bridge which crosses the Susquehanna River at Hallstead, Pennsylvania, the place at that time being called "Great Bend Village," while Great Bend on the opposite side of the river was called "Lodersville." Nothing interested him like politics. "He was n't like most young fellows," said a boyhood acquaintance. "There was one girl he might have married, but his mother stopped that — did n't think she was good enough — and — well, she *wa'n't*, either! The Grow's was real big people and she *wa'n't* their kind. And they *said* that one farmer livin' up that way locked his daughter up and kep' her there because she was so crazy in love with young Grow. But whether that's so or not, I don't know. He did n't seem to care about things like that, but he liked to be off somewhere speakin'."

"He was always into anythin' to be done,"

added another friend, driving his spade into the ground with the vigorous thrust of youth which denied his years; "like diggin' potatoes now. He'd pitch in and help!"

CHAPTER III

THE LAW AND THE LAND

PENNSYLVANIA at this epoch was still a "seed-plot of frontier immigration," passing on her inhabitants, and the dweller therein did not suffer, as did the New Englander, from the acuteness of sectionalism.¹ Grow was fortunate to live in an environment where wide interests were encouraged. With the earnestness which early characterized him, he went on to that study for the bar which his mother with such sterling judgment had indicated. After the campaign was over he entered the office of Governor Cleveland, of Connecticut, where he remained several months, going from there to read law with F. B. Streeter, of Montrose, Pennsylvania, in the winter of 1845, and in the spring of 1847 was admitted to the bar in Susquehanna County. He formed a partnership with David Wilmot, of Proviso fame, who was at that time a member of Congress from the district which was composed of the counties of Bradford, Tioga, and Susquehanna.

¹ Turner, *The Frontier in American History*.

Wilmot, Grow found, was in some ways a remarkable man. Born in the hamlet of Bethany, he had moved at the age of eighteen with his father to Dimock. Fortunately, at a nearby country-seat called "Woodburne," there was a good library to which young Wilmot had free access. In several volumes written by the Quaker companions of the Father of Pennsylvania, he found strong sentiments against the institution which made merchandise of men. They influenced his actions all the years of his life. He often told Grow that at this library he stored up a knowledge of our political institutions which was of great value to him in his public service. He studied law in Wilkes-Barre and commenced practice in Towanda, where Grow became a member of the firm.

"He was a typical old-time statesman," Mr. Grow once wrote of him. "Very portly, his face was beardless and full of intelligence. At certain times he reminded me of Edward Everett, although he did not have Everett's refined ways and accomplishments. He had a logical mind and was a forceful debater on questions in which he was interested, such as restricting the encroachment of slavery on the free soil of our virgin territories. His fight

for this principle brought forth his famous Proviso in 1846, during the Mexican War. The war was popular in the South, which desired more territory for slave purposes, but the North was lukewarm in its prosecution and Congress was trying to enable President Polk to negotiate a treaty by appropriating two millions of dollars for a large slice of territory which the South was desirous of securing for their slave system. While Wilmot was in favor of obtaining territory, he was thoroughly imbued with the Northern spirit and offered an amendment that "in any territory acquired from Mexico neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist otherwise than in punishment of crime where the parties shall have been duly convicted."

This Proviso lay as much in the hour as the man, although later many Northern Democrats were frightened into withdrawing their support. Wilmot remained true to his convictions, although he realized that his resolution was creating a wide split in the Democratic Party in his district. He stood bravely against all threats, one of the sturdy forerunners of the time of freedom.

It has been asserted that Wilmot is not the

real author of the Proviso; that either Jacob Brinkerhoff or Samuel P. Vinton, of Ohio, wrote it and requested Wilmot to introduce it. Mr. Grow contributes on this point: "I do not recall Wilmot ever mentioning the question of authorship, although we discussed the words and spirit of the Proviso many times. As these perfectly harmonize with the views he often expressed and emphasized to me, I am convinced that he is responsible for the Proviso both in text and spirit and that he merits all the fame that came to him by its existence."

Wilmot and Grow differed somewhat in the way they regarded the slavery question. Beginning his career a Democrat, young Grow, with his strong humanity and keen feeling on the subject of bondage, was moved by a strong desire to play an effective part in the settlement of the slavery issue, but he considered that the only way to approach it was through allied economic questions. To Wilmot the question was more detached. Grow firmly believed that the land was the great solvent. Controversial discussions between them on the various big topics of the day — immigration and labor, for instance — were

inextricably mixed with *How are we to solve the problem of the hunger of the crowds for land and the hunger of the land for the people?* The cry for land was in reality the "Marseillaise" of the "bread-fight" then going on, due to the pressure of that immigration which so excited political America that the Native American or Know-Nothing Party was organized in protest.

Grow felt that the on-to-the-land impulse was really an outworking of the soul of the nation, and the Government was failing when it did not so offer the soil that the people could gratify their insatiable appetite for home-building.

To-day, with our thriving civilization, the feeling of complete union among our States, our vast homogeneous business system with its great and more or less unified paraphernalia of transportation, commerce, and communication, its facilities for credit, industry, and trade, it seems practically impossible to transpose the West to the true key of seventy years ago. Grow, listening to its call, visualizing its future, could then with even greater difficulty foresee the practical changes which must take place; but he must intensely have felt the urge of the young country.

Not then proven even a transcontinental force, the life principle of nations pushed us forward toward the other ocean. Groping for true continental dominion, the acquisition of Mexican territory, Texas, and the award of Oregon completed our instinctive wants and we had an area of between five and six billion acres. It rendered us a contiguous structure, articulated; but we were as a skeleton upon which the flesh must be mounted.

The great West lay ready; what is roughly a third of our country was still a mysterious, unfulfilled promise, a lure to hardy spirits who must inevitably overcome enormous hardships and great danger to perform the duty which would bring forth uncertain rewards. That migration, of which De Tocqueville exclaimed in 1812, "No event can be compared with this constant removal of the human race except perhaps those irruptions which preceded the fall of the Roman Empire," had in forty years surged on momentarily.¹ The frontier was moving forward, but at this time the flood of migration had apparently spent itself at the western boundaries of Missouri

¹ Ellen Churchill Semple, *American History and its Geographical Conditions*.

and Iowa. The pivotal central valleys of the country, territories drained by our master rivers up to the edge of arid regions, were roughly conquered. But beyond stretched areas utterly new, waiting confidently in their fabulous wealth, full of marvelous minerals, untellably abundant of all resources. They gleamed in a sunset glory, and following those forerunners of agricultural settlement, hunters, trappers, cattlemen, all possessing endurance, sagacity, and resource, picked their way across the mountain passes, painfully breaking open the trails for a few heroic settlers. "Manhood in its prime and womanhood in its bloom are the core of all emigration,"¹ says Collier in his interesting papers on colonization.

The impress of such developments upon a young man already in the grip of the land idea, already with a vision of the nation expanding on a grand and beneficent scale, was naturally great. This effect could not escape being strengthened by the sweep of the impulse which possessed our people, who were in "that anticipatory fever which, just as heightened temperature marks the plant before

¹ Collier, "Colonization," *North American Review*, 1910.

budding,"¹ marks the great folk-movements. Motived by those causes, the adventure spirit, hunger, gold lust, desire for freedom of various sorts, which impel all migration, the earnest, adventurous advances of our emigrants into the "Indian country" and the back-land, the Oregon parties, the Mormons, the early Californians, touched the national imagination. The effect of the romantic movement westward had a telling effect on the spirit as well as the physiology of the new country. For behind the forerunners hived a people full of ambition, of energy, of aspiration, ready to seize the opportunity and advantage, willing to hazard or achieve, and urged forward by the rhythmic waves of immigrants. In 1845 two hundred thousand came, and each succeeding year more, North Europe's involuntary aid to us. Migration, aggressive, heroic, strenuous, was compelling us to provide for it.

The land-reform plea became ever more pressing. In 1844 Evans began agitating, in "People's Rights," to secure four things: (1) Freedom of the public lands in a limited quantity to actual settlers; (2) cessation of

¹ Collier, "Colonization," *North American Review*, 1910.



DANIEL FREEMAN OF NEBRASKA, THE FIRST
HOMESTEADER



the sale of public land to non-resident⁺ purchasers; (3) the exemption of homesteads; and (4) the restriction of the purchase of any other land to a limited quantity. A "Free-Soil" segment immediately appeared in the Democratic Party. Andrew Johnson's resolution the following year was the first formulation of public opinion, a resolution that Congress should award every homeless citizen or widow a portion of the domain. This created a good deal of discussion, much of it sarcastic, but it paved the way for a new programme and the proposal of other acts followed closely.

These propositions naturally caused Grow to review the legislation from early days relative to the domain. He wanted to know, with a lusty, American, constructive curiosity, why we had not even natural expansion; what made the occupation of land in severalty so unsatisfactory a business. He wanted to know why, after three quarters of a century, we were still doubtful whether the immigrant was sufficiently worth his salt to permit him to have land. He could not see why, as it has been since expressed,¹ we were getting rid of our public lands as recklessly as though they were

¹ Henry George, *Land and Labor*.

a curse. What he found is relevant to his whole later life.

The commons up to 1803 were made up of cessions to the Federal Government by the original colonies of about two hundred and sixty million acres which they had received from King George, tendered to satisfy Revolutionary debts. These sufficiently provided for, a policy was determined upon (1780) concerning the formation of Territories into new States, — which was the foundation of our territorial system,¹ — and a plan was settled upon for sale of the States' common property.

We did not immediately express our faith in democracy, as it would seem we should have done, by taking the log cabin with its primitive hearth as a symbol for our land programme. At this time the conception had not been wrought of private property based on anything different from aristocratic North-European forms of land tenure. The first two million acres went in two sales, and purchasers presented themselves, as to the Crown, to Congress through petitions, which were there acted upon and referred to the Board of Treasury.

¹ Shosuke Sato.

The first great free charter for our public lands, the Ordinance of 1787 (commonly called the "Magna Charta" of our land legislation), besides dealing with slavery, excluding it from the Territories, and defining the common rights of dwellers therein, established the principle of using the common lands for education and internal improvements.

Hamilton, two years later, submitted the first plan of a General Land Office for the administration of the domain, although the office was not established until 1812. In the same report in which he made this recommendation he favored small holdings as well as large sales. His influence was strong; the prevalent opinion had by this time come to be that terms of acquisition should be made easy. Nevertheless, the first general land law¹ (1796) provided for sale only in tracts of not less than 640, nor more than 5120 acres each. The custom of sales at public auction was established and the terms were not less than two dollars an acre. Credit was afforded; permission to pay in evidences of public debt was given, and the land was forfeit in case of failure.

¹ Morris Bien, *Land System of the United States*.

Then Uncle Sam made an effort to strike a more democratic gait. The unit of lands offered for sale was reduced to sections and half-sections at the same minimum price, with credit extended up to four years, with interest. This was the first really progressive achievement, a beneficial act which bore directly upon settlement, rapid improvement, and permanent prosperity of the first Western States. The Surveyor-General, whose office was then established just about as it is now, was authorized to lease lands for future disposition (1800). The earliest recognition of the preëmption right was also contained in the bill, as it provided that any person who had erected a gristmill was entitled to purchase the section on which it stood.

The first expansion of our territorial limits, unexpected and really unsolicited on our part when we acquired the vast, magnificent terrain known as the "Louisiana Purchase" just as it was acquired from Spain, including all the territory on both sides of the Mississippi River from its mouth to its source, an area four times greater than France itself and almost double the area of the thirteen colonies, made the solution of the land problem far

more imperative. Quite as significant and happy as the territorial expansion was our resultantly broadened point of view.

At the time we received this terrain, we fell far short of being willing practically to acknowledge the Government's debt for common men's labor. Our system failed to provide for the very classes which were to determine our character as a nation. Perhaps the most flagrant example proving this lay in the early "redemptioners"¹ who, that they might make for themselves homes in America, availed themselves of the "privilege" of binding themselves and their labor to captains or vessel owners for one, three, five, or seven years. Even after they had redeemed themselves, we had no chance of a livelihood to offer on the great back-land. A modest settler could not buy directly nor even lease from the Government a small plot to cultivate.

Trial of true democracy in land tenure was prevented by the persistent ideas of capitalist landlordism, maintained unreasoningly. But after 1803 the country seemed to realize that something was radically wrong with our system.

¹ Horace Greeley, on "Immigration."

The following year logical advance was made. An act was passed by which the lands were offered for sale in one hundred and sixty-acre tracts, and payment of surveying expenses and patent fees was discontinued. Two years after that, payment in evidences of public debt was forbidden, but credit arrangements were made even easier. The privilege of temporary occupation was given to settlers upon application in 1816. The preëmption idea was resisted as encroachment upon the rights of the States, however.

Immigration was comparatively slow up to 1820, only some 250,000 foreigners coming. Not until after that year, when annual totals mounted rapidly, were the democratic results of our territorial expansion felt in land policy. Then a new lane began to open in the public mind, down which the wise of Grow's generation saw a fascinating picture of prosperity. Oppression in Europe was forcing out the population, and the United States, presenting many chances to labor in our varied industries, offered the easiest channel for the significant flood of potential human wealth. In spite of this, in agriculture, the backbone of our existence, little but obstacles was at

first set before these humble people, rich only in labor power and land love.

The prevailing systems of administration of public lands were those of John Quincy Adams, whose plan was to make the national domain the inexhaustible fund for progressive and increasing internal improvements, and Henry Clay's "American" plan. But systems were not what the West wanted; they wanted land.¹ Benton, the man of widest views on the destiny of the West, thought a low price would avail. He proposed and fought through the first bill modifying the cost of public lands, and establishing an eighty-acre unit at a dollar and a quarter an acre. Demoralizing credit was stopped. Although no solution, this was good progress: but even under Benton's bill public auction still advantaged the buyer with money over the man without much cash.

A more elaborate graduation proposal was made later (1828), but the great controversy over land policy, which later shook the very foundations of the Union, really began in 1830 when Foote's resolution, a simple proposed inquiry into the expediency of temporary suspension of the sales of public lands,

¹ Benton, *Abridgment of Debates*.

precipitated the great debates of Webster, Hayne, and Benton, not only on the present and future conditions of disposal of the domain, but upon the doctrine of nullification and its sequence — the dissolution of the Union at the will of any one State. At that time practically two hundred and sixty million acres embraced within the States of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Tennessee were involved; all of Minnesota east of the Mississippi River, and all of Alabama and Mississippi east of the thirty-first parallel. Hayne held that the lands should be transferred to new States on easy terms for the benefit of settlers and cultivators. He deprecated their sale for money, either to be divided among the States or to accumulate in the Treasury, as leading to corruption and consolidation.

Webster defended the policy of sale at a dollar and a quarter an acre and maintained that disunion threatened unless federal authority over the lands was upheld. Benton, now a step advanced from his own graduation plan of 1821, fought obstinately for the inauguration of a policy by which the lands should no longer be treated as a source of revenue, but

should be given without charge and still administered by the Federal Government in its own favor. They would be, he maintained, the best sort of common interest for the States, cementing them as they should be cemented in union.

This great and prolonged debate set the ball rolling, and it never stopped for thirty years more. In 1832 a law passed providing for sale of as little as forty acres, and quaintly phrased that "all actual settlers being *house-keepers* on the public lands" should be allowed to enter such a tract, a statute which remained in force less than ten years. The important proposal of this period, however, was Henry Clay's bill (1832) for dividing the net proceeds of sales from the public lands among the States. It passed both houses, but Jackson, holding it over a session, vetoed it. His idea, "The Union must be preserved," influenced all he did. He was the first effectively to take the progressive ground that public lands should not be held as a source of public revenue, but as an inducement to actual settlers.

So unprotected was the mass of territory, however, that conditions became scandalous.

Land easily obtained from the Government brought an unearned profit. Great prosperity lay in its manipulation. Speculation mounted appallingly, everybody borrowing here, there, and everywhere to carry all they could. Danger of monopoly in lands was plain to any eye. They were paid for mainly, to use the phrase of the day, in "wild-cat and red-dog state bank currency," the paper of state banks which were the repositories of government funds. Jackson stopped that, laying it down that tracts should be paid for in gold or silver, and this "specie order" precipitated a panic.

Some of the States were in financial low water at this time, and it seemed to many politicians that the public lands would relieve them. States owed so much money, a good part of \$200,000,000, to the Barings and other European financiers that their creditors began pressing for settlement, suggesting that the Federal Government assume the debt. A graduation bill was proposed once more in 1838 to hasten some disposition of public lands. This failing, party politics, which greased the way for four fat measures at the end of the session in 1840, secured the actual passage of a preëmption bill which specified

that the proceeds of the public lands should be divided among the States.

If this law had stood, our whole subsequent history might have been considerably altered. However, it was instantly seen that it could not operate. The National Treasury was empty, a loan bill and a tax measure pending. In this act the Federal Government indirectly assumed the responsibility for the loans the States had made, by guaranteeing that they should have income for operations which the National Government controlled. The measure was so comprehensively extravagant that it was popular, but its principle was inimical to the general good. Benton even considered it a pernicious violation of the Constitution. Its repeal was secured the following year. It was not the preëmption right alone to which there was objection, but the state guarantee. Benton defended the preëmption principle to such effect that amplified rights were offered in the enactment of 1841 called the "Preëmption Act," which made land available even for aliens declaring intention of citizenship.

After three quarters of a century we had begun to recognize the immigrant as a suf-

ficient national asset to permit him in principle to occupy and buy land with the rest of us from the Government, on decent terms! Many men, like Benton, who fought for the measure, or like Grow, who watched it, were hopeful that it would induce real occupants to take tracts. They were doomed to disappointment. It never proved more than partially satisfactory even in the early days. Its two leading characteristics, private sale and credit, made it easy of abuse by the moneyed. The settler must live on the land, according to the provisions of the bill, in order to purchase at a minimum price of a dollar and a quarter. Too often his occupancy was a complete farce. After staying overnight in some rude shack or cabin, the claim could be filed upon whether or not it was surveyed. The advance in the principle of the bill was slight.

Occurring at a time when Grow was discussing avidly with his college mates major and minor affairs of public policy, this act and all which followed in the ten subsequent years had for him personal significance. Young, full of progressive spirit, he argued ardently the right of the Government to take advanced social ground in administering its

great common property. He was imbued with the best of the new spirit through which a great nationalism must come if a greater America were to come. And as Texas was acquired, several years later, — that marvelous realm we took from Mexico, — and Oregon, still later, Grow became completely and enthusiastically convinced that this land, held as free soil and well distributed, would make a huge success of America, whereas slavery and bad distribution might ruin us.

“Galusha,” remarked a friendly blacksmith, within whose hearing he expounded his views, “you may think you are a Democrat, but if you go on talkin’ like that, you won’t stay long in the party!” — a charge which he hotly denied, having a suspicion the while that it might be true.

He was genuinely glad of the repeal of the Land Act of 1847, which had pledged the national lands for the payment of certain debts. A federal policy of internal improvements, popular during the late twenties and early thirties,¹ but completely losing favor by 1835, was again being urged, and this time extending beyond roads, railroads, and canals to the

¹ Haney, *Railroad Grants*.

domain itself. McClernand introduced a resolution that the traffic in public lands should cease and that they should be sold to settlers at cost, but to Grow's disappointment this was never formulated into law. He watched Congress turn a deaf ear to the Commissioner of the General Land Office when he recommended that the preëmption privilege be granted to all actual settlers on the public lands whether they were surveyed or not; but took hope from the persistent agitation.

Although the aggressive plough furrowed ever farther westward, nothing more was accomplished toward the real solution of the settlers' problem for several years. Up to this time over one billion acres of unoccupied domain had been exposed to the greed of speculators and monopolists. Five general propositions had been presented to the country. W. R. W. Cobb's bill for the reduction and graduation of the prices of lands was the type of one. The other variously formulated schemes were: cession to the States wherein they lay; partition among the States; donations to railroads, canals, and so forth; and finally, donation to every occupant. The last plan found entire favor with Grow.

Throughout this whole period the experiments in political chemistry were most interesting. Elements were being gathered and tried out which would flux into a great party. Issues were emerging which would determine the future of the next century of the nation, none more persistent than the demand for lands which had its reflex action in congressional bills. The Liberty Party and the followers of Van Buren joined and called themselves the Free-Soil Party, standing for "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men." They nominated Van Buren on a platform vigorously protesting against slavery which contained these famous passages: —

Congress has no more power to make a slave than to make a king.

A free soil to a free people.

In four years land agitation had become a potent factor in American politics. Most important in its effect on the public mind was the measure initiated by Greeley, proposing to discourage speculation and secure homestead settlers by allowing every citizen or applicant for citizenship to preëempt one hundred and sixty acres on which he might live for seven years. On proving that he had lived

on the land he was to receive forty acres free if married, eighty if a family man, and the rest he might buy at a dollar and a quarter an acre with interest. If the land was not for the individual's own use, the price was five dollars.

"The soundness of the homestead principle is not questioned by the adversaries of the bill," Greeley wrote. "They have a safer method of warfare. No bill can be drawn so as to hit their several tastes — if the amount exempted is too high for one, it is too low for another. A secure but humble home to every family is one of the generous aspirations of a Republican polity." The bill failed, but his prophecy was stirring to men like Grow, who saw before them good work to be done.

Voting for Cass for President and Wilmot for Congress in 1848, Grow again showed his independence of Wilmot's opinions. Wilmot's choice, Van Buren, did not receive a single electoral vote, although he had nearly three hundred thousand popular votes. In 1850, however, there was a wide split in the Democratic Party in the district, James Lowry leading one wing. The Free-Soilers nominated Wilmot for reelection, while the Whigs

nominated John C. Adams, of Bradford County. Wilmot realized that defeat was probable, and ten days before the election the split became so threatening, in spite of earnest endeavors to restore harmony, that Wilmot and Lowry met to discuss the matter.

It is typical of Wilmot that even when he was ready to compromise, he was nevertheless masterful. He told Lowry that he was ready to name a compromise candidate, as otherwise the chances of the Whig nominee were very high. He concluded, however, "But, by G——, I'm to name the man!"

Lowry submitted, and it was agreed that the convention should reassemble and nominate Grow, passing the same resolutions which were adopted by the convention which nominated Wilmot.

Grow had just declined a unanimous nomination for the State Legislature, and owing to ill health was at this time rustivating at Glenwood. His genial oratory was very welcome on such occasions as that on which Tioga County celebrated in honor of the few remaining Continental soldiers in 1849, but he was comparatively little known save in his own neighborhood. A committee of two, a friend

of Wilmot and a friend of Lowry, came to ascertain if Grow would accept the nomination to Congress. This occasioned surprise among his Tunkhannock neighbors, who were accustomed to see him working day by day on the farm with no thought of entering public service at the time — at least not then. They found him standing in the waters of the little river, near where the chapel now stands, superintending the construction of a bridge across the stream. After consulting his brother Frederick, in whose judgment he reposed perfect confidence and who must have possessed acumen, he accepted with the understanding that the acceptance was to be in accord with the views of his friend, David Wilmot. "From the day I entered his law firm he had evinced true interest in me and my political tenets," Grow gratefully wrote long after.

Eight days before the election he hurried to Tioga County and explained his position on the questions which had caused a rupture in the party. At the time, John Van Buren, son of the former President, came to Susquehanna County to help Wilmot, and finding that he was out of the race took the stump for Grow, but somewhat ungraciously. The

election ten days after his nomination (October) gave Grow a majority of 1200.

During the winter, until March, he took up the compass and carried it during a survey of six thousand acres. His accuracy had gained him enviable reputation in this line. In the summer of 1851, and at times during the winter and summer following, the Congressman-elect worked on the farm. He also peeled hemlock bark for a tannery which had been built about a mile from Glenwood. He lived in a rough hemlock-board shanty with about thirty other men. They slept in straw bunks on the floor. At this time he challenged the champion bark-peeler in the valley to a match and beat him, an exploit greatly enjoyed by the countryside. It bespeaks native dignity when, at twenty-six one may be a Congressman, a first-class surveyor, and a champion bark-spudder at one and the same time without injury to any reputation. As training for a congressional career, subsidiary crafts, the chief principle of which is "hewing to the line" with all one's might and main, are not to be despised.

CHAPTER IV

MAN'S RIGHT TO THE SOIL AND MEN'S RIGHTS

WHEN Grow took his seat as the youngest member of Congress in 1851, the times were pregnant with danger. Land was more than ever the ferment in every situation. The curtain had risen on the first of five great extemporaneous acts in the Homestead drama. The curtain-raiser in the Senate the previous session had focused attention of Senators from extremes of the country. Douglas had put in a straight bill for free grants. Daniel Webster and General Houston put in homestead resolutions. Webster held with Greeley that every male who had declared his intention of citizenship should receive title to a quarter-section after a period of continuous occupancy; Seward and Houston, less liberal, would have excluded immigrants, but were also for the policy. Debate had been active but not acrimonious.

Already alternatives of what was satirically dubbed the "Vote-yourself-a-farm" plan were found in opposing measures to cede the pub-

lic lands to the States in which they lay on condition that they should be donated to actual settlers, or to graduate prices. We did not know what we had power to do with the wonderful territory which seemed to extend to the heart of the sun's western rays. It was a dead weight. Was the state of finances discussed in Congress, the revenue from lands drew attention; was even the necessity of snagging the Mississippi urged, it was pronounced impolitic to appropriate money until some conclusive decision had been taken concerning our attitude on internal improvements, of which the greatest problem was the settling of the domain itself.

Grow was strongly of the mind that a comprehensive progressive programme of land administration, of internal development, must be adopted to weld the Union more firmly. The hundreds of millions of acres given as bounties had not in the main served as a promotion to settlement. The would-be occupant, he who should have been the most desirable of all applicants, was exploited. It was notorious that the system of land sales had become media for transferring land into the hands of capitalists, who made a fat profit

from the home-seeker or held the soil idle. A "lottery system" prevailed, yet the land itself was calling. Petitions flooded Congress, sent in by thousands who, impelled by that wonderful impulse to better themselves which has been so amazing a factor in the New World, yearned to go West. But — was the territory we had acquired to be slave or free, to be worked as plantations or by individuals who could put their hearts into their small plots; to be donated or sold; to be held indefinitely or lavished on corporations?

The persistent opposition in the South to any policy which tended to augment the number of small farms was due to the knowledge that slavery could not thrive, nor survive, in regions where the large planter had to make way for the small farmer, and their energetic opposition to any effort to open the domain to homesteaders left all queries unanswered. The nature of the occupation of the public lands was inextricably involved with the question of the negro. The Clay Compromises, dealing with the new terrain, showed this. They contained a decision upon the owning of slaves in the baby State of California which had applied for admission, and

passed only because slavery was left to be settled by each new State formed out of Texas. The South was placed in a position to obstruct their admission unless she should be awarded her share of slave territory.

Temporarily stilling the spirit of sectional strife, the Clay Compromises could not affect the powerful unseen undertow in the current of events which was sweeping the nation slowly but surely into the depths of civil war. In reality the most startling struggle of our national life was on; the fight over the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise was in fact begun. "Bloody Kansas" was in the early throes of her bitter struggle against the encroachments of slavery. Pacific Railroad bills backed by powerful lobbies were agitating the political sea, and anti- and pro-slavery giants were only pausing before preparing for the final fray. Southern members of Congress calmly asserted that slavery must expand; Northern members heatedly answered that it must be restricted or die. The "irrepressible conflict" was gathering momentum under a guise of peace.

Grow, inexperienced, excited by his sudden exaltation to the ranks of the House, sat silent in the old Hall. With no belief that the

deliberations of that body would in his time be riven by the issue of slavery, he gave himself to the subject of land, clearly seeing the entanglement of the two questions, and all the more resolved to do his part toward the formulation of a clean-cut policy which would not agitate the negro question. He knew, as Woodrow Wilson has since so wonderfully shown, that it was the West which made the public-land question, the tariff question, and the question of slavery what they were. Wilson says: —

Without the free lands to which every man might choose to go, there would not have been that easy prosperity of life and that high standing of abundance which seemed to render it necessary that, if we were to have manufactures and diversified industry at all, we should foster new undertakings by a system of protection which should make the profits of the factory as certain and abundant as the profits of the farm. It was the constant march of wagon trains to the West which made it so cardinal a matter of policy whether the national domain was to be free land or not; and that was the land question.

Whatever might be said for the several modes proposed for the settlement of the domain, the great hope lay, Grow was convinced, in the homestead principle, so formu-

lated that we should allow all land classified as agricultural to be entered, make fraud and speculation impossible, and get immigrants upon the farms. When he made his entry upon the cue the great playwright, Fortune, had provided, Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, held the floor defending a homestead bill he had proposed six months after Douglas's broad measure in the House.

In the name of the common man, Johnson had come forward to ask recompense for the services of him who by his labor quietly and effectively contributed to the aims of government. Episodes attending the measure's proposal displayed Johnson's skill at parliamentary tactics, which procured consideration of his plan despite the adverse tactics of foes of the policy. Submitted as a homestead bill, objection was raised when it was moved to send it to the Committee on Public Expenditures, and it was finally, after the fashion of unwelcome proposals, allowed to languish in the Committee on Public Lands. So he shrewdly changed its title, re-introducing it as a "bill to encourage agriculture and for other purposes," then adroitly added its homestead description, a roundabout pro-

cedure which, when realized, was hotly resented by an array of important-looking men with prominent "speaking parts."

To involve only those lands open to private entry, the measure Johnson offered provided that every man or widow over twenty-five years of age should be entitled to receive free a quarter-section of that limited amount of land "open to private entry" upon condition of continued occupancy.¹ At first the bill read so that immigrants might have benefited, but later Johnson asserted that his aim was solely to alleviate poverty among *American* workingmen. He restricted its application to those already in the country at the time of passage, which rendered the scope of the measure's operation narrow if beneficent.

Even with this change, the Southern delegation was not attracted by Johnson's angle of presentation. Johnson was not of the type to find favor among the aristocratic plantation men. He did not represent them. He had been driven from his native State of North Carolina by want of opportunity, and, with only a trade and a self-administered education,

¹ No lands were subject to private entry until after they had been surveyed, brought into market, advertised, and offered for sale at public auction.

had won his way up. He held his seat as the honored representative of the un-landed and less affluent whites of the upland districts. Naturally, his point of view so differed that his Southern colleagues instinctively distrusted his leadership, and, challenging, were not reassured to find that Johnson had in his mind something not unlike our modern idea of redistribution of property. To this end he thought the division of some part of our government lands among actual settlers would be an excellent means. Some of his Democratic confrères laid hold of any convenient means to combat the bill.

Grow, determined to speak first upon this great issue, was destined first to talk upon another matter. Fate, or his whole-hearted humanity, caused him to come to the defense of the Hungarian patriot, Louis Kossuth. The latter had been imprisoned in an Austrian dungeon because he had attempted to relieve his country from oppression. Escaping, he had fled with comrades to Turkey, where they underwent terrible hardships, ended only by the United States giving them passage to America in a national vessel in the belief that they wished to adopt our land as a home.

In reality, Kossuth wished to awaken sympathy for his unhappy Hungary and to induce both England and the United States to put themselves on record as against the intervention of Russia in Hungary's affairs. A resolution was offered late one night in the House extending a welcome to Kossuth and proposing his introduction to that body.

One of the notably interesting figures among Virginia's Representatives, Fayette McMullen, opposed its adoption on the ground that it was a piece of impudence for a foreign rebel to come here and ask for sympathy, and that it was totally contrary to all precedent for the United States to take a stand protesting against international affairs on the Continent in which she had no immediate concern.

Grow was stirred. He was sitting but a short distance from McMullen. On hearing the argument, he rose, impetuously.

I cannot refrain from replying [he said as soon as he could obtain the floor] . . . He [Kossuth] comes here advocating the rights of crushed humanity and the cause of his native land, and asks the American people for their aid against the despots of his country. He asks them, as men standing in the shadow of Washington, to consider the cause of humanity, and for this he is charged

with "impudence." . . . If this be impudence, in what way would you have an apostle of liberty appeal for the sympathy and aid of a people whose country has drank the life-blood, not only of its own martyrs, but of every clime? Is it "impudent" to stand up in the face of nations and advocate the conscious rights of man? Is it "impudent" for the representative of a brave people to present the claims of his fatherland, and to the sympathy of the descendants of Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson? — to a country that in its hour of peril received the aid of Lafayette and DeKalb, and whose soil holds the ashes of Kosciusko and Steuben?

So generously did he urge that the decision of the House be based on humanities rather than on precedents of our international policy, and press the claims of Kossuth to consideration as a private citizen, that his defense was the occasion of many private congratulations and of a general recognition of his ability. Benton, Wade, Giddings, and many other men of power sought him out, and the resolution passed by a substantial majority. He had used the psychological moment promptly and well, prompted by sheer good feeling, and the pretty incident entitled him to sure attention in the Chamber on his next address.

In the Senate, Seward similarly defended Kossuth, who was accorded his reception in both chambers. Grow was gratified to see him conducted with honor down the center aisle of the House to a place inside the bar, where he delivered an eloquent address received with enthusiasm by the Northern members. The man of the hour for a time, Kossuth's fervid appeals, his quaint Shakespearian diction, his whole personality, fascinated. Several days after his reception a banquet was tendered him at the National Hotel, which was one of the gala events of the year. Vice-President King presided with Kossuth on his right and Webster, then Secretary of State, on his left. Grow was honored by a seat at the speakers' table, and his long remembrance of the fact testifies that it meant much to him.

Grow had his first big scene in the Homestead play, when (March 30, 1852) he delivered his keynote address — his first planned effort, to which he always therefore referred as his "maiden speech." It constituted a controversial lead to his ardent and finally successful fight for the establishment of an equitable policy of land distribution. Involving many questions to be decided for the country,

the policy so far was hall-marked neither by party nor by sectional bias. The lawyers' question of constitutionality was of first moment in all issues at this time. Advocates of the homestead had particularly to fight a lack of precedent for direct federal grants. Free grants of sorts had been awarded to settlers since the earliest times, and in the Oregon Land Act of 1850 were again offered through state channels. Among members from all sections and all parties there was difference of opinion on the proprietary rights of the Government in land "acquired of the blood and treasure of all the States," as well as the power of Congress to give it away.

Furthermore, the South was in something of a corner. Consistent protest was impossible because she had succeeded in passing within five years an act which ceded back to the Central and Southern States 27,300,000 acres of overflowed lands, worth at that time \$25,000,000. Granted because of the need of reclaiming surrounding property,—in other words, for the purpose of internal improvement,—this act served as slight but distinct precedent. If alienation of federal lands for such an object was feasible, grants for other

worthy reasons were feasible. If Congress could benefit a small group of States while, as a Southern member protested, "the other nineteen States did not receive enough soil on which to sprout a pea!" then there was no merit in the idea that the Government had no power to dispose of lands. Bounties to soldiers, grants to railroads and insane asylums, strengthened the case.

On the great constitutional question Grow recited the authority of the Government to dispose of the domain; the clause which provides that Congress shall have the right "to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations concerning the territory and other property of the United States." This, he held, imposed as a duty upon Congress "to promote the real and permanent interests of the United States." It was certainly important economic work to secure actual settlers at a price barely sufficient to cover the cost of survey and transfer, with such limitations and restrictions as to prevent the land falling into the hands of speculators. Occupancy, not sale, was of supreme importance, he argued effectively, pointing out that the settler performed invaluable labor for which the Government

could not afford to do otherwise than pay justly by title to the land. He looked upon the soldier of peace, foregoing his native environment to join the economic army, as serving his country in no less immeasurably fine a way than the soldier who went to battle.

Principle, expediency, protection, and ultimate increase in revenues demanded this policy. Receipts from the direct sale of public lands, Grow showed, were already in excess of what they had cost us originally and the States had no ground for complaint. Whereas Johnson put the homestead plan forward as a measure of paternalistic welfare work, Grow asserted that men had actual right to common lands. Bitterly controversial argument was contained in his broadly stated general belief in the inherent rights of man to the soil. Beyond the expediencies and forms of civilization, by the fundamental values of the matter, the use and occupancy of land alone should give a man, to use the language of Blackstone, "an exclusive right to retain in a permanent manner that specific land which before belonged generally to everybody but particularly to nobody"; and he quoted from the same source, "There is no foundation in

nature or natural law why a set of words on parchment should convey the dominion of land." Or, as Jefferson stated it from another angle, "the earth belongs in usufruct to the living."

Throwing himself into his humanitarian plea, Grow urged that happy firesides would follow the liberal policy of providing farmsteads, and that "as the means of sustaining life are derived almost entirely from the soil, every person has a right to so much of the earth's surface as is necessary to his support. To whatever unoccupied portion of it, therefore, he shall apply his labor for that purpose, from that time forth it should become appropriated to his exclusive use; and whatever improvements he may make by his industry should become his property and subject to his disposal. For the only true foundation for any right to property is man's labor."

Heterodoxy itself could not have been received with more derision than this courageously applied doctrine! Socialism never had a harder road to travel. Attack was instantaneous. A humanist idea, whatever its merits, it represented honest belief that labor, once, in the words of Adam Smith, the original pur-

chase money paid for all things, should serve in place of currency. The progressivism of the hour, it received the traditional quota of stormy protest.

Grow accepted attack stanchly and receded not a point. Backing came to him slowly. Most of the *dramatis personæ* of the Homestead play at this time made their bows to the audience. Notably several men appeared as friends of Johnson, Grow, and the bill, who became, as the action developed, hidden or open enemies. Two important characters of this ilk were Robert W. Johnson, of Arkansas, and Cobb, of Alabama, both pledged knights of a landed aristocracy. Yet Johnson declared that he deemed giving land to the landless glorious in itself, while Cobb announced that he had promised his constituents to introduce the homestead measure himself if Andrew Johnson did not do it!

When the many players in this spectacular show had spoken introductory lines, the action began to quicken. There were sharp incidents like the conflict between McMullen, now standing on common ground with Grow and Johnson, and his two Virginia colleagues, Averett and Millson, who at this early day

were irrevocably opposed to the measure. The South was in a predicament of inconsistency, because of the Swamp Lands Bill. Averett deliberately turned his back on his own vote and declared the proposed donation would be in violation of all our principles. Millson, on the other hand, acknowledging the mistake (from the States' rights angle) of the Swamp Lands Act, invited and received Johnson's sharp rebuke for commenting that he had looked upon this new land bill as a "practical jest, a burlesque upon those extravagant propositions which sometimes reached the House."

To this controversy members from Maine and Massachusetts added their voices — the East was strongly inclined to be jealous of the West and so stood with the South — pleading that the domain constituted a fund from which each State should receive an equitable portion. One Massachusetts member even introduced a counter-measure intended to force the constitutional issue, providing that the Government should repay to his Commonwealth her share of expenses in the late war with Great Britain. So ardent was the argument that Alexander Stephens, who, un-

like most Whigs, did not strongly uphold the constitutional power to appropriate lands and money for internal improvement, predicted that this issue would soon become a controlling factor in politics.

Johnson, expounding and defending his own measure, kept pretty well in the center of the stage. Not realizing that the weakest point of his plea was the benevolent argument for alleviation of poverty, he emphasized that "it had long been near his heart to see every man in the United States domiciled." He intelligently urged the authority of Congress to act and pictured the ultimate great revenue which must be derived from increased imports once the land was populated by producing, spending workers. He had both sentimental and economic appeals in his favor. The word "home" had a pull. Good business reasons tempted sane expenditure of public terrain as business investment. Johnson avowed that it was his "one great object to pass the bill in form acceptable to the country."

The thrilling moments of this first period of action occurred after the bill had progressed almost to a vote. Out of hosts of minor ones, an unprecedented amendment was offered by

Brown, of Mississippi, which was to change the bill altogether and create a tenancy system for preëmtors, affording them a right to purchase after a period of years of free occupancy. In reality this proposal would create a pernicious government vassalage. Not so much because the idea was popular as because it offered a diversion from Johnson's scheme, Brown executed a clever maneuver. At a time when there were but few members in the Chamber, he pushed his amendment as a substitute for the body of Johnson's bill and secured a vote in his favor of 67 to 56, entirely annulling the homestead plan.

This was profoundly serious. Homestead advocates bestirred themselves. A member who had not had a chance to vote charged a mistake in counting. A recount was demanded, and wrangled over with much consumption of time, to be finally refused. Meanwhile hasty scouring about for absentees went on. By the time the Chairman had succeeded in getting his position upheld, Johnson was in a position to end the suspense. He had enough votes to displace the amendment and secure the reinstatement of the body of his bill as a new amendment, the vote being 97

to 77. Shortly after, in May, 1852, his bill passed the House with more than 261 majority, owing to the popularity of the idea alone.

The Senate presented a different situation. The upper and lower Houses were distinctly opposed. Southern Senators—landlords all—stuck together in their dislike of the proposal and were determinedly obstructive. Also, reasons of expediency caused those in charge of the Pacific Railroad Bill to hold back any other measure in which a grant of land was involved until their own avaricious demands should be satisfied. Being in the majority, the Democrats contrived to give the Homestead Bill short shrift. A substitute for the Johnson Bill was tacked on the railroad measure, but was not accepted. Johnson's sympathizers in the Senate had no confidence of success at this session.

In general, failure to conceive the stupendous nationalization we must undergo was the serious fault in Congress. Population was a national need; development a national demand; the pressure of industry a national condition. If ceded back to them, States could not uniformly and competently handle the domain so effectively as could a central

government, were federal powers assured. It was plainly a common job, better done by the agent of all the States in common, the Government to which the people had delegated their natural rights and conferred authority over the soil. Yet those jealous of States' rights (which Hamilton had declared would more easily encroach on national authorities than *vice versa*) persistently contended that no adequate authority existed for federal action.

Men willing to work for some broad plan were not lacking. And there was no more serious advocate than Grow, rising in eminence and beginning to feel versed in legislative custom. None could have had at heart more closely the interest of the pioneer of whatever degree or nationality. Added force at the service of the nation, represented by the symbolic, willing shoulders of all settlers, alien or native, generously treated and protected, was the end to which he was looking, and already he strove earnestly to perfect a new bill which he hoped would do broader constructive work than the proposal which had now gained recognition in one House.

CHAPTER V

NEW RELATIONSHIPS

GROW's appreciation of the new world which he had entered could scarcely have been exceeded. He was vastly interested in every phase of congressional action and life. The manner of procedure, his friendships, the standards of conduct, the organic life of Washington, all opened new and fascinating doors to him, whose experience to this time had been built on the simple customs of a well-to-do countryside where real American ability was the main gauge of men and women.

The House of Representatives from 1851 to 1863 was the scene of many memorable conflicts, or "personal uprisings," as Grow called them. When he first entered Congress, until he became accustomed to the rough-and-tumble debates on the slavery question, he was amazed at the free use of epithets and other unparliamentary methods of gaining one's effect. The acrimonious discussions on questions of expansion gave rise to passions

which required more control than certain fire-eating members possessed. Grow had hardly taken his seat when Albert G. Brown, of Mississippi, a States' rights member, denied that the South was in favor of secession. Whereupon John A. Wilcox, a Union Whig from the same State, intimated in plain language that a certain congressional district in their State was against the Union. Brown denied this, and Wilcox challenged: "What you say is false." Brown rushed at Wilcox and dealt him a blow in the face. A hand-to-hand combat ensued in which chairs and desks were overturned, and when the fight was closed by the interference of other members, the area covered by the conflict looked as though an earthquake had occurred.

Grow could not sympathize with this sort of thing, although later he was to have experience which taught him that it was not easily avoidable. What was more, he warmly deplored the slavery discussion, which persisted. Trusting calmly in the efficacy of the Clay Compromises, young at politics, believing in the comparative quiet, he detected but scouted numerous symptoms of danger ahead plainly to be seen, and in this he had much

company among men who had every reason to be considered astute.

Franklin Pierce, achieving the nomination for the Presidency, seems to have had decidedly more caution, not to say misgivings, which were at variance with his public utterances. Before the election he was desirous of ascertaining the present condition of the political weather and a forecast. He wrote to Governor Bigler, of Pennsylvania, requesting him confidentially to get Wilmot's views as to the way the Free-Soil element would vote for President in the northern counties. The Governor enclosed Pierce's letter with a confidential note to Wilmot asking him to write a private letter that he could forward to Pierce.

In compliance, Wilmot predicted that the vote of the Free-Soilers in the northern tier would probably be cast with the two parties of their own affiliations; that while the Compromise measures passed in 1850 had produced a lull in the slavery agitation it would break out again, but in what form he could not foretell.

The Whigs [wrote Wilmot, in an interesting vein of analytical prophecy showing acumen concern-

ing the false serenity which veiled the serious disorders of the time] are now substantially a Free-Soil party and would resist any further aggression of the slave power; but if they succeed in electing a president they would be pro-slavery, as is the Democratic Party. So long as they are out they will be an anti-slavery party. Thus . . . there will be an organized political nucleus for the Free-Soil elements of the free States to fall back upon in this contest. We Free-Soilers of the northern counties will therefore probably vote for Pierce in this election, not because we believe in him, but because in our judgment it is the wisest course to prepare for the conflict which must come upon the extension of slavery in this country.

Grow, returning home, was renominated without serious difficulty, although the debates in his own county were very warm and the day was not past when rough handling and liquor were resorted to by an aggressive opposition. He threw himself into the canvass, making speeches as he did everything else, with a vim and a will; driving good horses, which he loved, to the various rallies. Between times, he could take off his coat and take hold of plough or axe, "which gave him bone and muscle and left his republican principles uncontaminated." This energy marked the difference between a "working and a

talking politician." Not especially a "mixer," he won the good wishes of his public by his consistent, active, conquering certainty. He vigorously advocated the Homestead proposition and he asserted his devotion to the pledge adopted at the Baltimore Convention, "to resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation on the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made."

Called by his constituents in homely, affectionate parlance the "Bark-spudder," his victorious campaign had its solid satisfactions. This election, in which Pierce also was successful, brought back to the House friends of particular importance to Grow. Giddings, who had greeted Grow with the greatest cordiality upon his entry into Congress, a celebrity because of the Creole case and the fight he had made in connection with it upon slavery while Grow was in college, had proved sympathetic upon the land legislation. He was more than willing to support Grow, as was Lovejoy, the brother of that Elijah Lovejoy whose tragic death at the hands of a mob had so stirred Grow's indignation long before. Owen Lovejoy was an anti-slavery man, and a

natural agitator, anxious to leave no task undone which would help to block the lodgment of that terrible institution in our free territory.

Salmon P. Chase was a good friend, too, and his sympathies were to be depended upon. Grow looked upon him as one of the mighty in those days. A Democrat who had acted with the Liberty Party and the Free-Soilers, Chase was sent back to the Senate by that not infrequent but still interesting coalition of the Free-Soil men and the Union Democrats. In that time of political flux Chase loomed a large and able figure, and served as a stimulus to Grow.

Ben Wade, who had entered the Senate the year that Grow entered the House, bluff in manner and rugged in character, was very comradely. Although Grow never became resigned to Wade's vocabulary of profane words, which was both unique and startling, he said that his robust and hearty use of them seemed somewhat to lessen their profane effect. They were most often used in connection with his profound contempt for artifice and sham. This Grow shared.

Unmarried, with none to do the honors for him, Grow lived very obscurely in Washington

in a boarding-house, partly because, as he expressed it, "Speaking in the open air a great deal superinduced a pestiferous bronchial affection which finally clasped hands with an old-fashioned dyspepsia, and the two together, in spite of my six-foot-two and strong wiry frame, forced me to live like a monk all through my life there. This led some to believe I was odd and in a way affected. But, after all, my absence from society was not a great deprivation, for I never liked those social functions which seemed to lack real sincerity. Wade once said to me, 'Grow, this society business amuses me. They send a servant to drop a pasteboard in your card-basket as a visit when you are living and send a negro with an empty carriage to your house when you are dead!'"

Wade's comments were a source of much delight. In conversation his repartee was delightful. "Tall, clean, amiable-looking," as one commentator describes him, he was feared in debate because of his biting sarcasm and fierce invective, and he was desperately frank. His combination of qualities was to be of the greatest use to Grow later.

The changes in the House and Senate were not less significant to Grow's future than were

the retentions. Two leading land advocates dropped from the field. There was better opportunity for new figures to be seen. Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, did not come back to the House, and the great agitator on the topic who held over from that epoch of big debates in 1830, Thomas H. Benton, contemporary of Webster and Hayne, was no longer in the Senate.

Benton was a figure of national interest. Missouri had sent him to the Senate for thirty years. Being defeated at last in the senatorial race, he had come as Representative when Grow entered upon his second term in the House; but he had become unpopular in his own State — where there were twenty-five thousand bondsmen — because of his opposition to slavery extension, and in the next campaign he was again defeated. Deeply imbued with the land passion, associate of trappers, traders, and explorers who gave him a profound knowledge of the Northwest, he left a very great gap in the ranks of the men who were particularly identified with the land interest in Congress.

Benton returned to Washington, however, after his defeat for the governorship of Mis-

souri in 1856, and lived there till his death in 1858. Attracted to Grow from the first time he voiced his theory of man's right to the soil, himself standing for the freedom of the domain and clearly seeing new fields which the American pioneer must attack, he encouraged Grow, doubtless accepting him as an admirable instrument of accomplishment. His quarters were near Grow's lodgings and they were in daily communication with each other. Benton had settled down for the purpose of having easy access to the records of the Senate and House while writing his "Thirty Years' View." He felt the burden of his task and expressed it to his young friend. "Grow, I am in my seventy-third year, and I must labor hard and swift to complete the task I set out to do. I can't get up to Congress very often to take in the news and gossip of the day, and if you will call now and then and bring all the information of interest you can gather, I will be very grateful to you."

Because Benton understood the things which were next to Grow's heart and valued his judgment, and because Grow had always looked upon Benton as one of the country's great men, Grow found him a thrilling com-

panion and invaluable teacher. He looked to the older man for analysis of men, motives, and affairs then and later, appreciating his great qualities as a statesman no less than his shrewd insight and keen humor, occasionally touched with malice.

Benton was a Jeffersonian Democrat, a strict-constructionist, a vigorous defender of his convictions, a lifelong friend of the Union, and a most intense hater of his political foes. An early encounter with Andrew Jackson, another with Foote, in the forties, and his continued opposition to the great triumvirate who dropped out about the beginning of Grow's time, Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, marked him first of all as a formidable fighter. He nevertheless displayed the most chivalrous impulses and fine feeling. Calhoun, one of his bitterest foes, had seemed to enjoy stirring Benton to passionate outbursts in the Senate. Yet it is typical of the old Missourian, broad-minded and kind at heart, that when the great slavery leader lay dying and some one broached the subject of his relations with Benton, the latter threw up both his hands in remonstrance, saying, "I won't touch that theme. John C. Calhoun is marked for death, and when

Death puts his hand on a man, I take mine off."

Grow testifies that he never saw Benton idle a moment in all the association which followed, and to the end of his life spoke gratefully and admiringly of him. Indeed, he quoted Benton so frequently that it was obvious that the influence upon him of the older man's liberal and broad ideas of public service, at the stage of his life when he was malleable and questing for determinant standards, was extremely powerful. He certainly enjoyed the first few years of his life in Washington, the period when Benton was there, much more than the later ones.

With these personal relationships began friendships which widened to a large circle. Grow gained quickly in general esteem because he could always be counted upon, even to the point of obstinacy. He was of homespun simplicity, he always spoke directly, his convictions were well known, and he was always dynamic. He learned a great deal from his associates, and a happy self-directing ability made it possible for him to see quickly what he wanted to do in Congress and how to do it.

CHAPTER VI

THE DOMAIN AS A SOCIAL QUESTION

WHEN the curtain rose on the second act of the Homestead drama at the beginning of the session in 1853, Grow launched his own measure on the billows of congressional opinion. To have a stormy passage before reaching its port of final destination as a statute, it entered upon its devious voyage inauspiciously.

The situation was complex. Two measures besides Grow's were put in: the first by Cobb, of Alabama, the second by Dawson, of Pennsylvania. Cobb's bill significantly marked the period of Democratic change. The issue has been adopted by both parties. The Free-Soilers, mainly Northern Democrats and Whigs metamorphosing into something new, several months after Grow made his first land speech in the House had inserted the following plank in their party platform and featured it: "That the public lands belong to the people and should not be sold to individuals nor granted to corporations, but should be held as a sacred trust for the benefit of the people and should

be granted in limited quantities to landless settlers." The Democracy resisted this broad stand; its progressive faction left it to Cobb, their representative, to protect the South's interest in the commonage. Only a smaller group of Southern stand-patters did not sustain him.

Of course the ultimate question before Congress had a far deeper significance than the disposition of so much territory; in its essence it was whether the ideal of liberty on which we founded the nation was to find justification in greater industrial freedom. A progressive land policy which should favor the agricultural laborer, white or free black, and give stimulus to the greatest of our industries at the moment we promoted human welfare, would open the whole domain. Freehold would confer the greatest economic advantages upon the masses. The Democracy, afraid of loss of power, could not ignore this altogether because of agitation and unrest: but the party offered compromises which were extremely questionable.

The South, not having the same angle on freedom as the North, was concerned with the immediate issue; whether, if the domain were to be disposed of, allotment should be

based on sale at a modified purchase price, preëmption, which was practically leasehold, or, if nothing less than freehold would do, what portion of the commonage to surrender. They viewed as the ultimate question whether lands unsold should pass into state control. Upon our decision between compromise with the old or adoption of a new policy rested the future homogeneity of our people.

Cobb was an exceedingly earnest, shrewd, and tenacious man, brief in speech, markedly practical, and an excellent leader. He had narrowly missed the Speakership the previous Congress, and his political turns were those of a well-poised weather-vane. His following was organized and powerful, while his skill in manipulating legislation was extraordinary because he had qualifications of experience, parliamentary knowledge, and daring — a triple alliance of no mean value. Naturally this proposal of his had peculiar importance. Curiously possessed of what might be termed a double personality — part homestead and part anti-homestead — the bill provided that one hundred and sixty acres should be available to all free white male persons aged twenty-one in that *limited area of land which*

was "*open to private entry*"; but the rest of the domain was to be sold at graduated and reduced prices. All lands which had been in the market for ten years or over should be sold to "actual settlers" at a price of one dollar an acre; those fifteen years or over, at seventy-five cents; twenty years, at fifty cents; and thirty years, at twelve and one half cents. This modification was not to be construed to apply to reserved areas or to lands granted to railroads or for internal improvements.

The proposal of graduation measures, the South's checkmate to the small-farm movement, was mere practical expedient. All sale plans had failed to prevent speculation. It was neither good business principle nor was it advantageous public policy to establish the precedent, as all these bills did, that the longer common land remained in the market the cheaper it became. Competent proof of settlement could not be exacted when the transaction was sale, not gift, and modified prices were only additional inducements to speculation. Cobb's so-called homestead scheme excluded all not native-born and the reduced-price sections committed the nation to continued sale, fundamental objections. It

was reported favorably from the Committee on Agriculture, and Cobb felt that he had his weapons ready for an anticipated fight.

Grow's bill and that proposed by Dawson went to the Committee on Public Lands. Dawson was its chairman and managed to get prior consideration for his own measure by reporting it out without loss of a day. In comparison to Cobb's bill it was less dangerous to the country. Limited to private entry land also, it at least allowed immigrants already here to benefit. It was, however, an immature bill, so loosely worded that only six weeks' residence on the land at stated periods was required. It did not attempt to lay out a general policy for the whole commonage, and what was serious, mineral lands were not excluded from the tracts offered for settlement. Vast tracts must have been opened to the capitalist speculator thereby.

Grow's was the only measure of the three essentially broad: it was the Homestead Act essentially as passed eight years later. No more of the domain was to be sold. It outlined as its primary policy that *all* land not set aside for special purposes was to be opened to entry by *bona-fide* settlers when surveyed.

There was no distinction between classes or peoples. All heads of families twenty-one years old were eligible, not only those then in the country, but those to come, provided that upon filing they declared intention of citizenship and received naturalization papers before patent was issued. Further than this, Grow had taken particular care to safeguard filing, residence, and proof so that continuous occupation for five years would be inescapable.

This worthy measure, modestly brought forward, unheralded, waited humbly for a chance at consideration. Dawson had so laid the lines that the Homestead, like a leading lady, entered first in the costume he wanted her to adopt. Grow, not losing sight of his own measure, was nevertheless so in love with free grants and so eager to secure some permanent recognition of federal power that he gave Dawson's work what loyal support he might. He believed that the essential now was to get the principle on the statute books, and that before the bill was passed much amendment might be possible. Cobb had given notice of his intention to submit a substitute. Grow did likewise.

Conservative Democrats, looking critically

at the handiwork of the North, viciously attacked Dawson's proposition because of its proletarian color; the charge of "agrarianism" and "leveling" was laid at his door. Early in the discussion Grow was up with a defense, pointing out that our whole history had been that of a distinctly democratic movement toward equalization, a leveling which was admirable. Agreeing with Grow, Dawson called it the sort of agrarianism which levels up, not down, the kind which every patriot and philosopher in dreams of love for his race have longed for and labored to see established among men. He added that the gentlemen who opposed the policy reminded him of those early navigators who forever hung around the coasts of the Mediterranean and western Europe, afraid to launch forth on the broad ocean which waited to bear them to a new world. Of course the proposition was not agrarian in the old offensive sense of taking from those who possess for those who do not possess. We were dealing with unoccupied lands which were a common fund, without intent to interfere with individual property.

The atmosphere of the Chamber during the House debate was by no means consistently

controversial. Cobb, Dawson, and Grow were all Democrats, but Cobb led the faction of greatest solidarity. Usually he worked genially in an apparent endeavor to better Dawson's measure, with no suggestion of ulterior design. Dawson was watchful and objected to his amendments; for instance, one that Cobb submitted which would change the beneficiaries to any man or *widow*, free, white, and twenty-one. Dawson protested that this might endanger the passage of the bill and that it was bad policy so to enlarge the application of the measure.

Cobb, however, in a mood of chivalric jocularity and sly badinage, insisted that he had been hoping that his friend Jones, of Tennessee, a bachelor (distinguished as the "Cerberus of the Treasury"), would have done even better than he did by bringing forward an amendment proposing to extend the privileges of the bill to unmarried females. Jones thereupon came in for many pleasantries upon his lone state, and created much laughter by taking up Cobb's dare. He moved to change the phrase to read, "any head of a family or eighteen years of age." This passed.

In the discussion of this same clause the

temper of the House changed tempestuously when Lawrence M. Keitt, later to have a noteworthy encounter with Grow, entered the action. Consistently, the first occasion of his appearance was to strike the color note, in regard to the word "citizen." He belligerently demanded of Dawson whether he regarded the free black in any State a citizen. Dawson, seeing danger, warded off: the mere mention of "Uncle Tom" was serious, while Uncle Tom going West (unless his master took him) was a revolutionary idea to uphold, inviting terrifying disquisitions. Yet some mischievous soul temeritously taunted Keitt and his sympathizers, jocularly submitting that any individual should be eligible to a homestead who "was more than half white!"

Straight economic reasons replaced the sentimental alleviation-of-poverty plea that Johnson had urged as argument for this policy. Grow drew this distinction: —

I do not understand the principles of this bill to be based on almshouse bounty or that the Government is to be converted into a bounty-dispensing machine to relieve the wants and distresses of the country. I understand that it is a policy which will furnish the best facilities for cultivating the wilderness, to make it answer the happiness and welfare of the race. . . . In this country the con-

trolling interest now and ever must be agriculture. What promotes that by giving permanency and security to it promotes either directly or indirectly every other industry. . . . It is agriculture which is of permanent and lasting interest. This bill is to secure settlement by . . . men who desire to cultivate; to secure it [land] to them free from the extortions and exactions of capital of the country, which has been permitted to take from their hard-earned savings too large an amount.

This attack on capital roused the stand-pat wing of the Democracy. Millson, the spokesman, gave battle at once, asserting that Grow seemed to be enamored of the homestead in whatever aspect it appeared. He tried to make out that the bill now applied only to the rich. One of his sallies was that "Like Sir Hudibras, the gentleman from Pennsylvania can

"Confute, change hands, and confute again . . ."

Grow retorted that he was opposed to any restrictions on applicants who would honestly occupy the land, either of birth or of property, and returned Millson's fire by accusing him of objecting to the homestead because the measure would draw off population from the old States and so change representation. Grow believed that the law ought to benefit and would benefit chiefly the poorer people.

The constitutionalists (Millson's stamp) became increasingly scornful. They said that the new States favored the bill because they preferred that the National Government should bear the cost of surveys and management. It was no use talking of the obvious unconstitutionality because, they intimated, the Chairman would manage to gag them some way. They took out their spleen in offering amendments to add a low price to the lands "to bring the bill within gunshot of the Constitution." They heaped ridicule upon it by moving to add to the section which specified "free of cost," that those making entries be provided with "one rifle-gun each," or that they be "furnished with one copy of the Constitution of the United States." These motions being rejected as not germane, it was suggested that the title of the bill should read, "Land for those who have plenty of land already, a farm for him who has a dozen farms now, a home for him who has no home." It was charged that homesteads were a bribe to the *lazzaroni* of Europe to come here. "Buncombe" was the most popular term of abuse.

Dawson, defending the measure, quoted that champion of Southern rights and strict consti-

tutionalist, Calhoun, who had advocated the policy and power of the Federal Government to grant alternate sections to railroads, but Dawson was so partisan that he fell into an error against which Grow's good sense luckily always protected him: he spoiled his effect by vaunting the superiority of Northern energy and initiative.

Cobb's temper apparently sharpened under this sort of thing, and he made a pointed and just attack on the inclusion of mineral lands in the area to be disposed of. Dawson, wary of Cobb and his purposes, was unwilling to yield a hair's breadth, but still found himself at a loss to defend the provision. Cobb thereupon served warning that if the proposal was not largely amended, he would press as a substitute his own bill, already printed.

Dawson naturally wanted to avert the proposed substitution. He was quite amiable when Cobb offered another amendment, to the effect that the bill should apply to persons who did not own one hundred and sixty acres — that any person might enter a quantity which would bring the amount in their possession up to a quarter-section.

All the signs were such as to cause Grow to

become decidedly uneasy. He knew that the threat of the South's checkmate was not idle. Amending and mauling grew determined and ominous. In the hope that a stronger bill might procure more votes, Grow tried to call up his own substitute. The Cobb amendment had precedence.

Cobb did not want to see Grow's broader measure have a real chance. He evidently considered well and laid his lines. He let his own measure come up, but then he declared himself. He preferred the Dawson homestead measure as it stood to his own, despite the clause which permitted immigrants already in the country to benefit because, he said, it provided for females and all persons having less than one hundred and sixty acres. Since Cobb did not urge his substitute, it was not accepted.

This left the path apparently clear for Grow, who offered his bill, with no intent to embarrass Dawson or to retard progress on the first measure, but because it contained practically every pertinent change proposed. He pointed out that it provided safeguards against fraud, stipulated continuous occupation, prohibited alienation of the tract after title was perfected, guaranteed the inheritance by children in case

of death of parents, but most important of all, that it was the only proposition to reserve all the rest of the domain to settlers. These differences were exactly those between an honest and comprehensive and a doubtful and limited measure still embodying a desirable principle.

Cobb bent himself to defeat Grow, and managed it. This settled Grow's chances for the time, since he could not again propose the same substitute, but he worked harder than ever in an attempt to graft his provisions on the Dawson bill in the little time remaining, with indifferent success. Keitt at this point tried to strike out the enacting clause; that failing, he moved to strike out the first section. Cobb did not support him, but Grow was not clear why; and although the measure was not what he wished it to be, he was genuinely glad and relieved to see it pass the House very soon, in March. His hopes were high of seeing it driven through the Senate.

Grow was elated because he thought of the act as a precedent from which to work out the best social purpose of the time. A new and significant human theory had hung in the balance between those who had desired to see our land system shaped upon some established

property plan redolent of European landlordism and those who had a determination that we should carve it out on new lines, bravely, to make possible some fundamentally democratic division between individuals.

Duganne, the poet, had sung the progressive social purpose: —

“A billion of acres of unsold lands
Are lying in grievous dearth,
And millions of men in the image of God
Are starving all over the earth.
Oh, tell me, ye sons of America
How much men's lives are worth?

“Those millions of acres belong to man!
And his claim is — that he needs!
And his title is signed by the hand of God —
Our God, who the raven feeds.
And the starving soul of each famished man
At the throne of justice pleads!

“Ye may not heed it, ye haughty men,
Whose hearts as rocks are cold;
But the time will come when the fiat of God
In thunder shall be told.
For the voice of the great ‘I am’ hath said
That ‘The lands shall not be sold!’”

But Grow's elation was premature. The fight was not yet done in the House. Cobb was waiting to make good his warning that he would amend the bill, and he did it in a man-

ner to make it a veritable *coup*. He secured a ruling from the Speaker that in spite of the fact that a Homestead Act had been passed, his proposal was still pending. The Homestead Bill, under the rule prevailing, was open to amendment, although by agreement debate on the subject was closed beyond five-minute speeches. In a word, there was neither a chance to debate on the construction of the measure nor to defer action. Cobb had had time to align in favor of his own proposal a number of Representatives who had voted for the Homestead Bill. He occupied a commanding position.

Cobb immediately moved that the homestead provisions be stricken out and the graduation clauses alone of his substitute stand as the main measure. On his part this was arrant desertion, *in toto*, of the original idea. Whether from private conviction or for political reasons, he was suddenly only willing that the country should be committed to modified prices, not donation. He lived up to what the South had looked to him to do.

Grow and the other friends of the homestead were in a maddening predicament. The parliamentary situation was far worse than at the

previous session when Johnson had to defeat Brown's maneuvers. All that Dawson and Grow could hurriedly do was to scout for votes. Seeing more clearly than ever that it was supremely necessary to our national welfare that recognition of federal rights be gained to undertake any essential system of internal improvements, Grow was thoroughly exasperated. The reason that Unionists, just when they had had another smell of victory, were facing frustration of their work was of course that it involved old questions of States' rights and new questions of human rights. The Union depended upon the adoption of some policy so big and generous that there could be no question of federal authority. Thus the Union would go forward to her best fulfillment — but perhaps not yet!

Deeply afraid, Grow moved an amendment to Cobb's bill that no lands hereafter surveyed should be exposed to sale, hoping so to limit the operation of the Graduation Act that it would do the least possible harm. Forecast of disaster, this amendment failed. Although the homesteaders defeated an amendment to cede all the lands back to the States, dissent reigned concerning the main proposal. The Home-

stead Act was stricken out; Cobb's graduation measures were left as the operative part. Grow had his first bitter legislative disappointment. He had fought sturdily to be rewarded only by defeat. Robbed of its short-lived triumph, giving Grow and his associates a serious setback, the homestead proposition was placed in another of those dramatic situations which attended its whole career. The first true Homestead Bill had gone to the Senate; but what would be the effect upon it now that this other, masquerading under the same name, had received support at its expense in the House?

CHAPTER VII

THE SENATE TAKES A STAND

THE scene shifted to the Senate. There was still hope that the upper House might favor the simple homestead idea. The House bill, without Cobb's amendment, was reported back from the Committee of Public Lands in February but slightly changed. Spectacular, acrimonious debate signaled a new defiance which indicated the lines the sustained fight was to follow. From this time on the history of the bill is intricate. Shuttled back and forth from House to Senate, from committee to committee, it was a plaything of rules and altogether a most interesting figure.

Early in the day Cass sounded a clear note in his strong declaration favorable to the proposition. In his opinion it was "the great measure of the session . . . provision for the settlement of a world"; and he asserted that we might now, in tribute to the value of free institutions, perform a new and noble function in the operations of government through the power of distribution, granting to each a part

of what belongs to all. "I can conceive of nothing in the progress of human society," he averred, "better calculated to add to the strength, the resources, and the moral power of the country than this plan of justice and equity."

Chase also ardently acclaimed the public lands as "the estate of the people." He maintained that they individually were its proper beneficiaries. The homestead plank which had appeared in the Democratic platform in 1848 was his work, and he consistently adhered to it. Also, he ably stated his view, when section six was under discussion, that there was no principle in discriminating between Americans and incoming foreigners who would naturalize. This part of the bill read: —

And be it further enacted that any individual now a resident of any one of the States or Territories and not a resident of the United States, but at the time of making such declaration of intention as required by the naturalization laws of the United States, and who shall become a citizen of the same before the issuance of the patent as made and provided for by this act, shall be placed upon an equal footing with the native-born citizen of the United States.

Controversies raged over this section. Al-

though many of the best men of the Senate were for the immediate definition of a land policy which should bring about settlement, it immediately became clear that the Southern members and the pro-slavery Democrats of the North had formed a powerful combination unalterably opposed to a straight grant without price or to any plan wherefrom foreign-born people might benefit. The senatorial sponsor for the measure at this time, Dodge, defended the policy with regard to aliens. It was already established, since the preëmption laws already permitted any foreigner fresh from Europe to make entry. He complained that the bill was misunderstood and abused, and that all sorts of "raw-head and bloody-bones arguments" were being raised about it.

Thereupon came an attack typical of combative factional feeling within the party. A Senator from Alabama, Clay, accused Dodge, whose career was fathered by the Democracy, of being unfilial to his political faith. "It appears to me that, repudiating the Scriptural injunction, 'Hear the instruction of thy father,' he is a perfect illustration of the self-sufficiency and impiety of progressive young America, kicking off swaddling clothes, 'Dodge-

ing Daddy,' and going it on his own hook." He declared that the bill was an infraction of the rights and would degrade the dignity of the land States, work serious harm upon landholders, and inflict serious injustice by dividing the common treasure. "Wrongs so serious and iniquitous could hardly be endured by stoic or by saint!" he cried passionately, and asserted that if the proposal passed, its effect would be something he had never expected to see, a Know-Nothing or Native-American Party in the South.

The Know-Nothings, just coming to powerful organization, were of course entirely in sympathy with the South in opposition to the measure. National character was in the making, and the pressure of alien ideals was acting, in general, counter to certain influences of the old colonial stock. The effort to found a national party to resist racial and political predominance of the newcomers received merited ridicule from the homesteaders.

Seward took occasion, because the Homestead Bill was being fought, not on principles of political economy, but on blind prejudice, to read the creed of the exclusionists printed by a Massachusetts journal. In its sixteen

articles there were just a half-dozen founded on sound American principles. The rest of it was an intensely bigoted, anti-Romanist, anti-alien declaration. Although Seward had not named the strange secret organization so mysteriously pervasive at the North, a Southern Senator, Dixon, of Kentucky, — he who was later instrumental in precipitating the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, — demanded incautiously if Seward meant to say that these were the principles of the Know-Nothings.”

Seward retorted, “I know nothing of the Know-Nothings!”

“If the Senator knows nothing of the Know-Nothings,” contended Dixon facetiously, “it seems to me very strange that he should here pretend to state what the principles of the Know-Nothings are. I should like him to explain, if he knows nothing of the Know-Nothings or their principles, how he reads here the principles of the Know-Nothings?”

The Senate, in high glee at this exploitation of the foibles of its secret fraternity, redoubled its merriment when Seward, in full enjoyment of the opportunity for badinage, replied, “If my excellent friend had paid close attention to what I said he would have learned that I

said nothing of the Know-Nothings. My reason is that I always say nothing of that of which I know nothing! Again, the Honorable Senator will excuse me from answering his question because it is my purpose to say nothing of the Know-Nothings, because of the Know-Nothings, as I have already stated, I know nothing at all!"

Making his effect, Seward continued seriously that it was sufficient for him to say that everything is un-American which makes a distinction of whatever kind in this country between the native-born citizen and him who renounces his allegiance to a foreign land and swears fealty to us. He pleaded for the necessity of foreign labor to satisfy our great national wants in industry, commerce, and agriculture alike. He pointed out the diminution of the cost of labor due to the influx of foreigners and declared that their exclusion from homestead benefits would act injuriously; that farm labor would be high, that we should be interfering arbitrarily with the laws of supply and demand, and that the population of the States would be prevented.

When it was not the immigrant, it was the negro who was perpetually in the woodpile.

However much Mr. Grow and his senatorial friends wished to avoid it, the sixth section was bound, with the South in this temper, repeatedly to be made the excuse for connection between the slavery agitation and the homestead policy. Like Keitt in the House, one Southern Senator felt serious alarm because the words "individual," "person," "head of a family," or "citizen" did not specify color or citizenship, and therefore might include negroes; he advocated in the course of rabid debate that the sixth section be struck out altogether.

Chase, faithful suitor for a free folk-land, showed that even under the laws of some of the Southern States — for instance, Virginia and North Carolina — there was no objection to a negro holding land; that there were negro property owners in those States. Southern Senators retorted that Pennsylvania courts had at this time declared that the negro was not a citizen, and suggested that the Senate thereupon as a body settle the status of the negro — meaning, of course, that he should be declared not eligible to citizenship.

It was obvious that the South was sparring for time while deciding on some definite plan.

Much that was extraneous but extremely flavorful occurred in debate. For instance, a Kentuckian thus caricatured Senators with presidential ambitions (such as Cass and Seward) who were in favor of the bill: "The presidential aspirant starts out a-demagoguing, and although his father might be Irish while his mother was Dutch, drawing himself up in true American style, he then, of course, offers all the land to men promiscuously, just as the Wicked One of old offered to our Saviour the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship him, when the old scoundrel had not an inch of *terra firma* in all creation to put his foot upon!"

Examplimg upon such ridicule, other Democratic members offered numerous and sundry reactionary amendments, including one which provided that any mechanic unable to comply with the provisions of the act was to receive one hundred and sixty dollars in cash from the Treasury; the preëmption substitute proposed by Brown in 1852 was again introduced; they wrangled over the age of applicants; indulged in asseverations that public lands should all be reserved for military bounties; attacks on the wording of the bill were frequent —

nothing likely to harass its friends was too small to delay action. The Pacific Railroad Bill was fought against it.

Reviewing some of the objections, one of its few Southern defenders summed up with considerable feeling: "Never since I have occupied a seat on this floor have I seen a measure so assailed as this has been. They have fought this bill as Christian and Infidel fought in the days of the Crusaders. They have gone into the most ultra-guerrilla warfare I have ever witnessed in civilized society. Have they attacked the principles of the bill? I think not. They urge objections!" It might have been Greeley complaining again.

The tournament of opinion at lance grew hotter. Wade, Seward, Dodge, and Chase, were the homestead's most strenuous knights. Splendid forensic fireworks were displayed on all sides. Feeling waxed so high that personalities marked the last weeks of the session. An unprogressive Democrat named Clayton, who had been waspishly persistent in his attempts to annoy homesteaders, and who obviously was bent on making political capital out of anti-alien agitation, changed his jousting weapon from the knightly lance of opinion and

set upon the ardent group of supporters of the bill with verbal sandbags. He attacked Wade principally, and provoked him to answers heated and none too wise, resulting finally in Wade flatly giving him the lie. Seward to the rescue! He interposed with flashing argument, took the brunt of the onslaught, and came out of the recurrent wordy skirmishes with flying colors.

By this time it became clear that behind the scenes all was in readiness for coherent counter-action by the Democrats. Some sort of alternative would be adopted. It was Robert W. Johnson, whom we saw in the previous session favoring the homestead, who acted now as spokesman for the entrenched, stand-pat Democracy. His dictum was in the nature of a climacteric stroke. The bill, he now opined, was "so strongly tinctured with abolitionism that no Southerner could vote for it."

The dubious uneasily shifted their position. Counting noses, the homesteaders found themselves sure to be outvoted. Therefore they had patiently to endure while various compromises were discussed: a nominal price, or a simple modification on a graduated scale. But the forces of power were plainly behind a

pernicious substitute offered by Hunter, of Virginia, which proposed to connect a system of graduation similar to Cobb's (only applicable to private entry areas) with a permanent system of preëmption comprehensive of the whole domain. It contained dangerous States' rights doctrine. Power was conferred upon the States themselves to preëmt land, which they might then offer to "settlers" at a higher price if they chose. Excess above sales was to vest in them, and the Federal Government would be denuded gradually of all the commons.

The opposition was crippled; the coalition of Southern and Northern Democrats was sufficient to put the bill through. It passed and was sent to the House for consideration, while the advocates of the homestead raged. They preferred Cobb's act to this, and that had meanwhile come up from the House; but even if that were passed, it was evident that full recognition of the principles and liberties in which they believed would probably be denied them.

In August the Senate was again debating land policy, and Chase and other homesteaders threw themselves into the fight in a gritty effort to change the tenor of Cobb's bill. Chase

proposed the straight Homestead Bill as an amendment-substitute. This move caused astonishing controversy which emphasized the wide differences of procedure between the two Houses of Congress. The presiding officer declared that putting one bill as amendment to another was contrary to parliamentary law! He would not allow it to be done.

Seward and Chase both debated the point bitterly. The Senate at that very session had decided this issue otherwise! In vain they argued. That it had been entirely legitimate to substitute one bill for another in the House, as had actually been done with the very measure under consideration, had no weight with the Chair. That it was the restoration of the original bill of course had no bearing! He stubbornly held his ground, Southern Democrats applauding. Chase made an appeal from the decision of the Chair: it failed. The Cobb Bill passed, becoming a law.

Two rivals had displaced the original Homestead Act. One now already occupied an assured position as a statute. But the other was on the table of the House awaiting action. This other consisted of the enacting clause of the original homestead measure, its body,

however, barbarously superseded by a rival of worse character even than the Cobb Bill — a body which threatened not only to usurp the homestead's immediate functions in "private entry" lands, but to block its way for good by involving the nation with a plan of state control of all territory.

This aim was not to be achieved with ease, however. Homesteaders in the House rallied. When the Hunter substitute was pushed forward, the indomitably hopeful group, having seen the trick twice turned against them, now made a concerted attempt to kill the Hunter provisions by moving the original Homestead Bill as a superseding amendment — in other words, restore the bill to its original shape by the same method Cobb had successfully used. Cobb, guardian of all such measures, and possibly not himself in favor of the Hunter plan, defeated three distinct attempts to reinstate the Homestead Bill, but protected his own measure by not permitting action on the Hunter substitute, and adjournment settled the matter.

In the subsequent session this bill was not pushed. When the Graduation Act was to be slightly amended in 1855, again the home-

steads made a determined effort to tack their bill to Cobb's measure and reverse its effect. Although he had calmly displaced the Homestead Bill in this manner, Cobb protested forcibly at the persistent attempt to turn tables, and defeated it. By no means all the homestead men in the House felt that it was wise further to jeopardize its chances, and the Graduation Act, only slightly changed, was signed in March.

CHAPTER VIII

THE REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE

BEFORE the homestead measure had been finally dealt with that other great battle, subplot of our drama, was begun, the smoke and thunder of which obscured so many other significant events of the day. The proposal to repeal the Missouri Compromise was not expected. The subject sprang up like a conflagration which, smouldering under control, suddenly gains headway and will not be stopped. It was all the more startling because Pierce, beginning his administration, had called attention to the prevailing tranquillity. Grow, playing a modest part which in several years was to develop generously, was suddenly brought to a new sense of the epoch in which he lived.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 distinctly gave the right to keep the slave system out of the territorial dominion. Yet the South was restive under its agreement. Woodrow Wilson effectively phrases it: —

Slavery within the States stood sufficiently pro-

tected by every solemn sanction that the Constitution could afford. No man could touch it there, think, hope, or purpose what he might. But where new States were to be made it was not so. There at every step choice must be made; slavery or no slavery? — a new choice for every State; a fresh act of organization to go with every fresh act of organization. Had there been no Territories there could have been no slavery question except by revolution and contempt of fundamental law. But with a continent to be peopled, the choice thrust itself insistently forward at every step and on every hand. This was the slavery question. "Not what should be done to reverse the past, but what should be done to redeem the future." We must not mistake the programme of the anti-slavery society for the platform of the Republican Party, or forget that the very war itself was begun ere any purpose of abolition took shape amongst those who were statesmen in authority. It was a question, not of freeing men, but of preserving a free soil.

Most of the time from 1789 down to 1854 in the House the anti-expansionists could, by certain combinations, control all efforts to extend the slave system to the free States and Territories, but it was different in the Senate, which was constantly opposing the admission of free States without the admission of an equal number of slave States. This gradually developed on the part of the South the

position that slavery was essentially righteous, and that Congress had no right to restrict it in the Territories, which in turn resulted ultimately in the Nebraska Bill in which Douglas laid the mine which was to explode in fratricidal war.

Repeated attempts had been made to secure a territorial government for Kansas, but Southern votes persistently negated this proposal, ostensibly on the ground that the Territory could not be opened to settlement without interference with Indian reservations secured by "definite and solemn treaties." A bill to organize a territorial government for Kansas and Nebraska, introduced by Willard P. Hall, of Missouri, had passed the House in the Thirty-second Congress. It practically covered all the Platte country. Kansas was to include those regions in the latitude of Missouri and west of that State and Nebraska was to have the remainder. In order to carry into effect the principles of the Compromise measures of 1850, the act provided that the question of slavery should be left to the people. The questions as to title to slaves were to be left to the local courts with the right of appeal, and the fugitive slave laws were to be opera-

tive. Nothing was said in the bill about the Missouri Compromise.

During the last hours of the session the bill was taken up in the Senate and talked to death by its opponents, notwithstanding the apparently earnest efforts of Senator Douglas to secure its passage. During the discussion many Democrats felt convinced that Senator Atchison, of Missouri, was right when he said: "It is evident that the Missouri Compromise cannot be repealed. So far as that question is concerned, we might as well agree to the admission of this Territory now as next year or five or ten years hence."

Of the surprising subsequent events, Grow chanced to be in a position to have special direct information.

Senator Dodge, of Wisconsin, in the next session, 1853-54, introduced an organization measure for Nebraska in the same form as the one which had previously passed the House, and it was referred to the Committee on Territories of which Douglas was chairman. A substitute emerged and Douglas's report contained this reference to the Missouri Compromise: —

Your committee do not feel themselves called

upon to enter into the discussion of these controverted questions which produced the sectional strife and the fearful struggles of 1850, so your committee are not now prepared to recommend either the affirmation or rejection of the eighth section of the Compromise Act of 1820.

This famous section, fought over in 1820, provided for the prohibition of slavery, but the return of fugitive slaves above the boundary of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes, north latitude, in the Louisiana Purchase.

As soon as Senator Douglas had made his report, Senator Dixon, of Kentucky, gave notice that when the Nebraska Bill came up for consideration he would offer an amendment for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise Act.

This proposition was a great surprise to Senator Douglas, who went at once to Senator Dixon and earnestly appealed to him not to offer his amendment [testified Mr. Grow]. On the 23d of January, 1854, to the surprise of many Senators, Douglas reported a substitute for his original bill, making two Territories instead of one, with a section repealing the Missouri Compromise Act.

In the interval between the reporting of the original bill and the substitute, Senator Douglas, Senator Slidell, and myself dined at the house of James Campbell, of Pennsylvania, who was Pierce's Postmaster-General. After dinner Douglas and Slidell entered into a lively conversation about

the proposed legislation, during which the latter in a very earnest manner said, "Douglas, you ought to make one Territory and repeal the Missouri Compromise."

I mentioned to Benton that I had dined with Douglas the night before, and that he seemed undecided as to which position he should take in the Kansas and Nebraska Bill, and was fluctuating in his views about slavery expansion. I added that I believed that Douglas was inclined to lead the Democracy away from its moorings.

"My God, Galusha!" cried Benton, "have you the faintest idea that Steve Douglas is leading the Democracy anywhere? Why, the Democracy has led him around by the nose for years, and he's got so that he would follow it to hell if the majority went in that direction."

His bitterness toward Douglas arose from the latter's compromising tendencies, and Benton insisted he ought to have been a milliner, as "trimming was his chief vocation!"

That same day Senator Douglas, with John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, and Philip Phillips, of Alabama, both members of the House, called on Pierce for a private interview relative to the repeal of the Missouri Act. In a conversation with Douglas afterwards, he told me that the President was very emphatic in expressing his opinion that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional and ought to have been repealed in the struggles of 1850 when the Clay Omnibus Bill was passed.

Douglas said that he suggested to the President that he pencil the form of an amendment for its

repeal to be added to the pending Nebraska Bill. The President then wrote in pencil the amendment and handed it to Senator Douglas. As Douglas, Breckinridge, and Phillips were leaving the room, the President stopped them and said, "I wish you would go and see Marcy."

They agreed to this and went to see Marcy at the Department of State. He was out, and as there was no certainty of the time of his return they hurried back to the Capitol. The amendment, as the President had written it, was, in a day or two, presented to the Senate. Douglas told me that he kept the penciled amendment so that there should not be any misunderstanding about it afterwards with the President.

This account is particularly valuable because it is made by one who was sufficiently in touch with Douglas at that time to hear his side of the incidents which made so great a change in the spirit of Congress, and it differs in some degree from others; for instance, the account given by Seward's biographer, Lothrop. Grow, not at all in favor of the repeal, but giving this interesting side-light on Pierce's hand in the beginning of the matter, would completely refute the common charge of collusion between Seward and Dixon.

Faithful to his constituents and his conscience, Grow fought the repeal with all the

energy and eloquence he could command, and as he was effective and ready in debate, on his shoulders fell a fair share of the burden. Although he was a Democrat, his consistent stand against the expansion of slavery was to his mind entirely harmonious to the best, although the minority, Democratic feeling. In stating his position, he asserted that the Compromise had in the first place been accepted by the South; that no injustice had been done to her by it; and that her voting to extend slavery would be the breaking of faith. As an early and constant friend of the Administration, and as an earnest and devoted Democrat, he announced himself as desiring the defeat of the repeal. Being one of the opponents of the measure within the ranks of the party, he was urged to compromise his beliefs to party policy; the leaders argued that if party men did not stand together they would be voting with abolitionists.

“Is there any man upon this floor so craven,” Grow challenged with strong feeling, “that he will refuse to utter his deep convictions and vote the sentiments of his heart because he will stand on record with some man whose opinion on other questions he does not approve? If

the representatives of the South would strike down true men of the North forever, they have but to force upon them the passage of this bill as a political issue. Its passage will be a violation of a compact of freedom which is the last breakwater between them and the surges of Northern abolitionism." Referring to Clay's stand at the time of the Compromises, Grow had quite obviously the purpose to turn the broadest-minded of the Democrats back to that position, or to Benton's, which was similar. It seemed only to madden Southern Democrats when he quoted Clay's response to Jefferson Davis, "Coming from a slave State as I [Clay] do, I owe it to myself, I owe it to the truth, I owe it to the subject, to say that no earthly power could induce me to vote for a specific measure for the introduction of slavery where it has not before existed, either south or north of that line [36° 30']. I am, for one, unwilling that the posterity of the present inhabitants of California and New Mexico shall reproach us for doing just what we reproach Great Britain for doing for us." Grow finished an able speech by scoring the fallacious faith the Southern States were reposing in the proposal to find relief from political strife by dis-

solution of the Union. Disunion was in the air, and he uttered strong protest against the security Southern advocates expected to find in it — “the security of despair,” he called it, “enveloped in darkness and woe.”

No one could stem the tide. The repeal passed the House by a small majority. It had been plain that the fight was hopeless in the Senate, and the leaders there had been bent mainly upon a desperate effort to prepare the issue for the House and the country. Seward's resigned exclamation was echoed in the House. “Heaven be thanked,” he said, “that since this cup of humiliation cannot be passed, the struggle of draining it is nearly over.”

The scene in the upper Chamber upon that famous night when the bill passed the Senate Grow described as very impressive.

Just before midnight [May 25, 1854], the lobbies were crowded with excited spectators who had gathered to witness the finale of this act, and many members of the House were among them. A moment before the final vote was taken, Seward rose and faced the Southern Senators and uttered his memorable words: “The sun has set for the last time upon the guaranteed and certain liberties of all the unsettled and unorganized portions of the American continent that lie within the jurisdiction of the United States. To-morrow's sun will rise in

dim eclipse over them. How long that obscurity will last is known only to the Power that directs and controls human events. For myself I know only this, that now no human power will prevent its coming on, and that its passing off will be hastened and secured by others than those now here, and perhaps by only those belonging to future generations."

Amid profound silence David R. Atchison, President *pro tempore* of the Senate, arose and proclaimed that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had been adopted by a decisive vote. In an instant the devotees of slavery passed into a delirium of joy over what they thought was the final and lasting triumph of slavery. Cannon boomed from the Maryland and Virginia heights surrounding the Capitol and reverberated along the banks of the Potomac, where, within six years, the men of the North were to meet the men of the South in a deadly combat that was to cost ten billions of dollars and nearly a million of precious lives.

The following incident occurred after the bill passed which made Nebraska and Kansas slave territory. George W. Kittredge, a member of the House from New Hampshire, in my presence during a conversation with Senator Dixon said, "When you threatened to offer your amendment to repeal the Missouri Compromise, had you any idea it would pass?"

"No," replied Dixon, "I did not think it would be possible, but I always believed the Compromise unconstitutional and that it never ought to have been enacted, and as we Whigs were in a minority,

Senator Jones, of Iowa, agreed with me that I should offer the amendment and that we both should speak on it; but Douglas, getting the endorsement of the President, stole a march on me and will get all the glory there is in its passage!"

CHAPTER IX

RESULTS OF THE REPEAL

WHILE the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was pending, anti-Nebraska Democrats and anti-Nebraska Whigs each separately held a number of special conferences, uncertain what position to take if the repeal were accomplished. When it was evident, ten days beforehand, that the repeal would occur, they hesitated no longer. A joint conference of all anti-repealers was held in one of the parlors of the National Hotel, Senator Solomon Foot acting as chairman, and Reuben E. Fenton, of New York, Grow's best friend, as secretary.

This meeting Grow attended and called it the "seminal beginning of the Republican Party." He had come to feel that his friend the blacksmith's diagnosis was at last thoroughly right — that he did not belong in the Democratic Party, if it stood for what it now appeared to, and could not stay in it. The wave of indignation meetings which swept over the North, at last aroused by the repeal, testified to the widespread antagonism created.



DANIEL FREEMAN, THE FIRST HOMESTEADER, AND
GALUSHA A. GROW, FATHER OF THE HOMESTEAD
LAW, AT THE GROW WELCOME HOME IN MONTROSE,
PENNSYLVANIA, 1903

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That strong feeling practically dismembered the old political parties as they existed before May 30, 1854.

The great mass meeting which was held at Jackson, Michigan, composed of citizens belonging to all the anti-expansion parties, was the next marked step toward new organization. At this meeting Zachary Chandler was a conspicuous figure and many others subsequently prominent in national affairs. The repeal was roundly denounced and the calling of a state convention of all citizens opposed to the extension of slavery decided upon.

There was no hall large enough to accommodate the crowd which responded to the invitation to meet to "take such measures as shall be thought best to concentrate the popular sentiment of the State against the encroachment of the slave power," so the meeting was held in a grove of oaks, and in consequence the meeting-place of the convention is known to-day as "under-the-oaks." It was here that the name "Republican" was adopted for the new party whose cardinal principle was to be "no further extension of slavery." Horace Greeley had suggested the name "Democratic-Republican," but the convention

omitted the word "Democratic," the general sentiment being that the party of Jefferson during his administration was called "Republican," and, as the new party was to adopt his policy of slavery prohibition in the Territories, that name would be most fitting. Grow accredited to the meeting in Jackson, Michigan, in name and in fact the birth of the party.

There were other meetings held prior to the one "under-the-oaks," but proof does not appear that they were more than political assemblages mainly representing the vicinage. None of them seem to have been fully authorized delegate conventions representing public sentiment of the State. So, while Amos Tuck, chum of Lincoln from 1847 to 1849, may have suggested the name at Exeter, and while the Saratoga and Friendship conventions may have talked of this name, Grow considered these previous signs as constituting merely a period of political pregnancy.

Owing mainly to Grow's stand on the repeal, his constituents elected him unanimously to his third term, and when President Pierce signed the bill he went over to the Republican Party. It is striking that, although Grow had been elected in the first instance because

Wilmot's views were too radical, he was re-elected repeatedly on a platform far more advanced than Wilmot's.

Grow found himself in a small but distinguished company, to which he brought very welcome qualities. Hale and his followers also entered the ranks of Republicanism; Chase, Sumner, Seward, and Wade, together with most of Grow's best friends, were wholeheartedly in the new organization, first important result of the Repeal.

One of the first issues which this ardent group had to deal with was another territorial matter, fostered under Southern care. Buchanan, Secretary of War in Pierce's Cabinet, directed by private letter Romulus W. Saunders, then our Minister at Madrid, to find out, in a quiet way, whether the Spanish Government would sell to the United States the island of Cuba at a price not exceeding a hundred million dollars. In this letter Buchanan said, "Do not send any written notes, because they might bind the next Government against us, but make the suggestion."

The territory looked especially attractive to the South because Cuba would naturally be

annexed as a slaveholding State, and the addition of two Democratic Senators was a desirable achievement. Forcible seizure was urged by some Congressmen, while others pleaded on various grounds for purchase. Cass, Northern Democrat, urged that it was unwise to allow a foreign power to own territory so near our coast.

Grow and all Republicans stood with Hale against annexation and considered Hale's retort to Cass particularly happy. "The Senator from Michigan favors the annexation of Cuba because its proximity is a constant menace to our welfare, yet every night of his life, while he is at home in Detroit, he can throw a stone into British possessions from his bedroom window!"

By the end of that session Grow's political convictions had become settled and in that hour when every strong man counted because parties were convulsed. At this time the half-liquid qualities of his youth seem to have become crystallized. The needs of that war which had already begun, although without guns, deepened the initiative, boldness, and forthrightness of his nature and habit to sound, balanced maturity. A fine adminis-

trative quality began to appear as he worked efficiently for the party to which he had committed his hopes of service.

In the new alignment of men and parties he felt a keen ambition to make at least some slight study of other governments and their institutions, and as a result, in the intermission after the adjournment of Congress in March, 1855, Grow went to Europe with some of his colleagues, among whom were E. B. Washburne, of Illinois, B. Pringle and E. D. Morgan, of New York. Besides their observation of such political and economic affairs as were comparable to our own, they had beguiling and more or less significant experiences.

They reached Paris during a week of great interest and not a little importance in the future history of England and France. It was the first time in almost five hundred years that the reigning sovereign of England had visited France as a guest. Queen Victoria arrived in Paris accompanied by Prince Albert, the Princess Royal, her eldest daughter, and the Heir Apparent.

Great preparations for flattering display of grandeur were made for the reception. The streets from the railroad station to Saint-

Cloud, a distance of seven miles, were lined on each side with soldiers in full uniform, both horse and foot, numbering about ninety thousand men. For the whole distance flags and buntings were suspended along the streets. Paris poured its inhabitants forth into the avenues, furnishing to Americans of those days a novel sight, for it was literally a sea of faces. Even the roofs were populous.

Grow had a window fronting the railroad station to see the royal cortége of six carriages, with four horses each, and two postilions, two footmen, and two outriders, start on its way. From the carriage up to the steps and through the station was spread a fine carpet for their Royal Highnesses to walk on. It was a gala spectacle to watch them come. Our Americans were just in time. The Queen, Prince Albert, the Princess Royal, and the Emperor entered the first carriage and drove off, followed by notables, the Imperial Guards, and equipages of other guests.

The party shared in the festivities of this week, and George Mason, the American Minister, secured them an audience with Emperor Napoleon and Empress Eugénie. Grow records in an interesting autobiographical note: —

During the conversation, the Emperor, who was at one time in this country, asked Washburne in what part of the United States he resided. Washburne replied, "Galena, Illinois."

"Oh, yes," said the Emperor, "there is a great deal of lead in that region. What do you Americans do with all that lead?"

"We sell it to our friends and give it to our enemies!" Washburne answered, at which the Emperor laughed heartily.

After a long and interesting talk with His Majesty we were conducted by Minister Mason into the audience room of the Empress, who looked very beautiful and received us most graciously. She spoke English with a pleasing accent and directed her questions to one and then another of the party, touching many subjects and seeming well posted on them all. When she came to me she remarked, —

"The Emperor has told me much of your country, the grand scenery and the vast extent of territory. You seem to have more land than you know what to do with."

I began, "Your Majesty, we have sixteen hundred millions of acres of unsettled lands —"

She naïvely interrupted, "Yet there is a little spot you want very much —" (meaning Cuba). "What are you going to do with this unoccupied domain?"

"We are going to give it free to your countrymen and others when they come to live among us," I answered.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "how wonderful that a

young nation can do such generous things for its people!"

After a lengthy audience, Mr. Mason, who was an elderly gentleman with white hair, turned gracefully to the Empress. "Your Majesty, we must go now, for I see that these young gentlemen are falling in love with the first lady of France."

She shrugged her shoulders and smiled. "I should be only too proud if I knew that I had inspired them with respect."

Later they were escorted by Donn Piatt, then Secretary to the American Legation in Paris, to a grand ball given in honor of Queen Victoria, the Prince Consort, and those in waiting. But ten Americans were invited. Court dress, composed of a military coat with gold lace around collars and sleeves, black and white trousers with yellow lace around the sides, white vest and cravat, sword and chapeau, was imperative. Grow wrote: —

I engaged my suit, and if some of my bark-peelers could have seen me with that uniform on they would have wondered who I was! I hardly knew myself when I had it all on at once. But there was no admittance without a "wedding garment," as Washburne called it, and I was bound to go, for it was the only royal ball I ever expected to attend, and a bachelor like myself would have had a cold heart indeed to decline an invitation to attend a ball graced by the Queen of England and

the Empress of France. Since meeting the Empress in private audience I felt that if she should appear as well in the ballroom as she did in private conversation she would be the center of attraction, for there could be no more fascinating person than Eugénie in those days of her glory.

It was not disappointing — a very brilliant affair, and every conceivable uniform from the Orient and the Occident was on parade. If the gowns of the ladies were as high in the price as low in the neck, the cost must have been staggering. On the whole, my colleagues and I were entertained by the splendor and gayety the scene presented.

Grow's "on the whole" suggests that they found the clothes or the ceremony somewhat trying, but at least the experience was a very rich one for recollection.

The party went on in a few days across the Alps, from Geneva over the Mont Cenis Pass to Milan and by Genoa to Rome, which they reached in time to witness the annual illumination of St. Peter's and the Vatican. The Pope was then recognized as the temporal sovereign, and the affair was novel and entertaining to strangers. Going from Rome by diligence to Naples, they climbed Vesuvius to see a sunset from its ashen summit. After examining the ruins of Herculaneum and

Pompeii, instead of going to the Crimea as they had planned, they returned to Rome because cholera was prevalent in the peninsula. There is a true American enthusiasm in Grow's statement that they "took in" Venice, Florence, Lake Como. They recrossed the Alps with visits at Zurich and Lucerne.

Grow seems particularly to have enjoyed the lake at Altdorf, finding the little temple where it is said that Tell, after he had shot the apple from the head of his son and threatened the tyrant Gessler with another arrow, made his escape in a boat while the lake was in the throes of a violent tempest. Also he was highly amused, after asking the guide to act as interpreter while he asked the captain of the little steamer about the historic places on the lake, to have the heretofore-mute master of the vessel speak up in very good English, "I was raised in Vermont and ran a steamboat on the Hudson River from New York to Albany for eight years!"

After a stop at Basle, interesting because of its immense wealth, they entered the Rhine Valley, stopping at Baden-Baden. There they saw something of the peculiarities of the country. The gambling-house was even then one of

the finest buildings of the place, fitted up in good style with a large ballroom, and open at all hours, — “Sundays same as any other day.” They were greatly struck by the sight of well-dressed ladies at the gaming-table betting largely from morning till as late at night as the party stayed.

The fact that there were no Sabbaths on the Continent, that the day was devoted to pleasure and amusement, that there were no more people to be seen in the churches, seems to have astonished Grow. “State religion had a class set apart to attend to such affairs,” he writes. “Just as there was a class to govern, there was a class to worship, and the people seemed to think it was their business, that they were paid for it and should attend to it. They left religion to women and children largely.”

Equally bewildering to him, who instinctively cherished old-time American reverence for women, was the want of courtesy toward ladies. That they were paid no deference, that men did not offer their seats or make room seems to have made him feel shame for his sex.

You could see anywhere, especially in Italy, ladies carrying the carpet-bags, with shawls,

umbrellas, and one or two children to care for, elbowing their way through a crowd while their husbands or the gentlemen accompanying them leisurely picked their way along where it was most convenient without offering relief. . . . The more an American sees of Europe, unless wedded to antiquity or dazzled by the glitter and pomp of royalty, the more strongly attached does he become to the institutions of his own country. There was no spot I saw after leaving New York that any consideration would induce me to make my permanent home.

The institutions and the character of the American people were at that time just beginning to be understood in Europe. Our steamers were making the fastest trips across the ocean. Our yachts were beating the fastest of the English clubs out of sight in a few hours' sail. Our agricultural and labor-saving machines were taking the first premiums in world exhibitions; and our commerce was not much less than that of England and rapidly increasing. Reflecting men inquired, "How has all this been accomplished in a half-century?" and "What will Americans be, at the rate they are going, at the end of fifty years?"

I found that national pride was markedly wounded that Commodore Perry should have succeeded in accomplishing two years before what they had failed in centuries of accomplishing, a hurt not softened by the fact that Japanese officials had informed Commodore Perry, after the conclusion of negotiations, that it had been their design that their first treaty of commercial intercourse

with any nation should be with the people of Washington. That they knew Washington's history, and were well informed about almost everything relating to America, was the secret of our success where others failed.

Going from Mayence by steamer to Rotterdam, where the great German river loses itself in the sea near Delftshaven, the party all agreed that some fitting memorial should be erected by the descendants of the Mayflower to mark the historic spot from which the Pilgrims departed in the Speedwell to join their Mayflower companions at Plymouth on their eventful voyage to the New World. In the stirring events which followed their return the patriotic project was never carried out. Amsterdam, The Hague, Brussels, the field of Waterloo, Paris, England, Scotland, and Wales took the remainder of the time until October, and they made some survey of the old systems of land tenures.

Then they returned home to find the United States still in a turmoil over slavery, "but nevertheless a delightful country in which to have our being. The truth is it makes an indifferent American a good one to see Europe with its civilization, habits, and customs, for he

then fully realizes the blessings of free government and the marvelous heritage our forefathers left to us and future generations," concluded Grow. Certainly by new contacts he himself escaped many provincial contractions of view.

The period to which they returned was most interesting, for the fledgling Republican Party faced its most important fights. Upon the convening of Congress occurred probably the most exciting contest for the Speakership which ever took place. Nathaniel P. Banks, the "Bobbin Boy" of Massachusetts, was the first Republican nominee. William Aiken, of South Carolina, was the Democratic candidate. Perhaps it was partly the fact that Banks was a Know-Nothing as well which made the election so thrilling.

Public sentiment had given the anti-slavery men an opportunity to secure control of the House. The classification of members was, Democrats, 79; Anti-Nebraskans (including all anti-slavery expansionists), 117; 37 Whigs and Know-Nothings inclined to favor slavery. The loss of Democrats from the previous session was 78. Beginning December 3 the fight for the Speakership lasted two solid months,

until February 3. Balloting for Speaker was all the House did, practically, except to indulge in acrimonious discussions under the five-minute rule concerning the influence and effect of the Repeal.

After one hundred and twenty-three ballots the country grew very restless and weary at the prolonged contest. A general cry arose for the House to elect a Speaker and do business or to adjourn without delay. Whereupon Cobb (personified Democracy!) offered a resolution declaring Aiken Speaker, describing it as "an olive branch of peace."

Forthwith Elihu Washburne, to the great delight of the Republicans, moved to "lay the olive branch on the table!" The balloting went on. After one hundred and thirty ballots, the House finally declared by resolution that after three more ballots without choice the candidate who received the highest number of votes in the next division would be declared elected, regardless of the absence of the majority of the whole vote.

The Republicans, Grow among them, were wild with excitement. It meant a signal success to the new party if they could elect their choice. On the next three ballots Banks received 102

votes; Aiken, 93; and the other candidates, 30. The clerk called the roll of the one hundred and thirty-third ballot, which would be decisive. The tally was: Banks, 103; Aiken, 100.

Banks was declared elected. Enthusiasm reigned in the new party. Some of the Democratic members attempted to question the legality of his election, but Aiken magnanimously declared that it was fair, and forced his colleagues to accept defeat with such grace as they might command.

Declaring that such an exhibition of fanaticism would never again be heard of, the Democrats grudgingly gave way, refusing to recognize this first victory as the beginning of a great political revolution in the land, fruit of that Repeal which in the long run was to advantage the North.

CHAPTER X

KANSAS: AND KEITT *vs.* GROW

AFTER five years in Congress it had become fully recognized that land was Grow's medium; he worked in land as a sculptor works in clay. "Grow's got an idea about the West and a feeling for it," was about the way his associates phrased it. His training in the Indian Affairs Committee had made him familiar with the "hither edge of free land," — the successive frontiers, — and had brought him along the road of his absorbing interest, giving him an understanding of transmontane conditions. His promotion to about as important a place as Banks had in his gift, where matters of land policy and slavery must necessarily focus, gave him an enviable post from which to watch all the fascinating aspects of migrant America, to hear the steady tramp of oncoming Europe, and to study the curious "cross-fertilization of ideas and institutions." Here, dealing with partition of territory, he had to scheme out the fundamentals of a formative

society; determining the civil relations of inhabitants.

Kansas, focal object in the national brain in 1856, had been one of Grow's chief concerns since the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Slavery was never forgotten. The invasion of the State the previous year, when Missouri tried to usurp her rights, had resulted in the Republican Party declaring for "Free Kansas," and Grow felt deeply on the subject. On the opening of the session, he led a fight which prevented the seating of the Kansas delegate, Whitfield, the House deciding after his arraignment that no election had been held.

Then the assault on Sumner occurred, on May 22, close on the heels of his bitter speech on the "Crime against Kansas." Lawrence M. Keitt was Preston S. Brooks' companion when the latter struck Sumner over the head with a heavy bludgeon, not only sending him unconscious and bleeding to the floor, but crippling him for three years. Keitt, who at first kept back all who came to the rescue, was out of the jurisdiction of the Senate. The House, however, to Mr. Grow's entire satisfaction, censured him severely. Keitt, of whom we shall hear more later, was nevertheless

promptly reëlected. Grow had no faint conception at the time of this incident that the day would come when Keitt would lie prone upon the floor battered by a blow from his good right arm.

The acridity of spirit between slaveholder and abolitionist was not one whit greater than that between pro- and anti-expansionist, and in both Houses there was constant clash on the rights of Kansas. Grow aroused particular antagonism by introducing, a few weeks after the assault on Sumner, a bill for the admission of Kansas as a free State, a step he considered her only possible relief. In the closing debate upon it he protested the outrages and wrongs that had been committed, — freedom of speech denied; printing-presses destroyed; incendiarism; persons stopped and searched; papers seized without legal process, — all because the citizens declared that slavery was an evil and objected to its introduction.

He continued his aggressive policy by controverting Alexander Stephens, who attributed these troubles to causes other than the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; Grow said that the repeal was for the purpose of opening the way to make Kansas a slave State, that it

was a conspiracy from the start and had been carried out with violence and brute force. He made a strong appeal to the South to restore peace and harmony to the Republic by admitting Kansas with a free constitution and desisting from the attempt to nationalize the institution of human bondage.

The battle on the bill, which passed the House but was tabled in the Senate, and on the Douglas-Toombs measure for the "pacification" of Kansas, cleared the way for titanic work which the party had on hand. On the Douglas-Toombs Act Grow made a direct, forceful, nobly spoken attack, and although this speech was made when he was ill, it was free from a certain floridity and repetition which sometimes marred his utterances. He revealed the faults of the measure, showing that if the bill passed Congress would recognize slavery as legally established in the Territories. It provided for the appointment of commissioners to take an enumeration of the people who should vote and to apportion the members of a convention to form a constitution for Kansas which they were not compelled to submit to a vote of the people. It relieved the inhabitants of none of their grievances,

nor were any of the many laws legalizing and sanctioning slavery changed.

This able speech had a personal reaction on Grow. Feeling went higher every moment. Frank and courageous, moved fundamentally by large purposes, he was conspicuous in the House. Southern antagonism localized against him. Furthermore, he persisted in his effort to clear up this matter which was making war. It essentially affected the land, and he hoped that, once settled, the way would be clearer for other policies he was bound to propose again. He answered President Buchanan, who in his Annual Message had defended the border ruffians. Buchanan had written: —

If the passionate rage and fanaticism of partisan spirit did not force the fact upon our attention, it would be difficult to believe that any considerable portion of the people of this enlightened country should have so surrendered themselves to fanatical devotion to the supposed interests of the relatively few Africans in the United States as to totally abandon and disregard the interests of twenty-five million Americans.

Grow retorted from the floor of the House: —

The men of the North have not surrendered themselves to “the supposed interests of the relatively few Africans in the United States.” The

rights of the citizens of Kansas are the rights of twenty-five millions of Americans, and the wrongs of one should be adopted as the wrongs of the other. If the rights of one man in this country can be trampled by legislative enactment, the rights of all may be. When men are disfranchised by law and the law rests upon the Government for validity and sanction, it comes home to every person, no matter in what part of the Republic he lives; and he who would sit quietly down and permit wrong and injustice to be done to a citizen of the country when he can prevent it is guilty of a dereliction of duty. The supervision of all their legislation being under control of Congress, let it remove from the people these odious enactments which the President has declared must be enforced and secure them the free and undisturbed exercise of their civil rights and privileges.

Nor did he cease his activities here. He brought in a measure to authorize the payment for property taken or destroyed under color of law. This he followed by a bill for the repeal of the existing statutes in Kansas. His persistence made him obnoxious to the rabid among slavery men. His sincere hard labor for some settlement, in face of their disapproval, furnishes at least partial refutation of the charge that Republicans wished "to keep the wounds of Kansas bleeding while their adversaries wished to bind them up."

Urged to be a candidate for Speaker in 1857, Grow refused because he did not think his chances especially good. James L. Orr, of South Carolina, got the place, defeating John Sherman. That year in the hot debate on whether or not it was expedient to limit the African slave trade, Grow was unlucky enough further to augment antagonism. When Southern men proposed to "postpone" a vote, he repeatedly interposed objections. The resolution passed stating clearly the opposition of Congress to any reopening of the slave trade.

In constant opposition to Democratic tactics, his persistence was maddening, his opponents thought. On the offensive his personal force was like a powerful projectile; on the defensive he had a resistance which was immense because he never lost his head. He had not great rhetoric, or, as they used to say in those days, "metaphysics," but his skill was ample. "This being objection day . . ." he would begin and prevent the introduction of pet Southern measures. His manner was quiet, but on occasion aggressive, and he reaped hostility that his friends sowed because of his loyalty to them.

One of these friends, Owen Lovejoy, speaking on slavery one day could not refrain from caustic and bitter remarks, which acted like a royal bread poultice that draws infection to an inflamed head. Potter, another friend, of different caliber, but withal a brave, stable, faithful fellow, upheld Lovejoy when the pro-slavery radicals attempted to silence him.

Roger Pryor, member from Virginia, able lawyer and debater, took exception the following day to a remark of Potter's which was published in the "Globe," "The Republican side of the House shall be heard from, let the consequence be what it may!" Pryor declared that Potter had not used the words as recorded, but had doctored them for the printer, and therefore he had them erased from the records. Potter said that he had them inserted because they had been inserted by the reporter and that Pryor had erased them without his knowledge, which he had no right to do.

Whereupon Pryor challenged Potter to a duel. The choice of weapons lying with Potter, he named bowie knives. Pryor immediately rejected this proposal as barbarous. Lander, Potter's second, immediately challenged Pryor's second to fight with any weapons he chose.

This offer was also rejected and the affair blew over without a duel. .

Although they never fought, the incident made Potter popular throughout the North, especially in his own State, the general hysteria of the time being such that people North and South were glad their representatives showed spirit even to the point of personal combat when what they considered their personal rights were assailed.

Grow hated such rows, but he greatly enjoyed the stories of the day which hinged on the episode. An old German member was asked, while both Potter and Pryor were absent from the House, conferring about the duel, "Where is Pryor?" "Oh," he replied, "I dink he iss in der hands of der Potter." And when some one inquired where Potter was, he answered, "He has dot Pryor engagement!"

There was very little fun in the general situation, however. Rancor gained on both sides. Keitt roused the ire of Grow and all Republicans by repudiation of the name "National Democrat," giving as his reason, "... because I hold the Constitution to be a treaty between sovereign States and that this Government is not a Nation." When one considers the strife

and turbulence of the hour and sectional feeling at high tide, one cannot wonder that the moment for personal encounter should again arrive. This time Grow himself was involved.

The occasion arose during a debate concerning President Buchanan's Message of 1858 on the Lecompton Constitution, that pro-slavery instrument foisted, against the majority will, upon the people of Kansas, who had just elected a legislature which refused to recognize the illegal act. President Buchanan, dominated by Southern Democratic influence, favored the Lecompton document, but there were sufficient Northern Democrats opposed to it to compass its defeat. Fresh bitterness was engendered by the audacity of the Lecomptonites, and fierce words were constantly being passed.

During the afternoon of Friday, February 5, 1858, Alexander Stephens, of Georgia, moved to refer the Message to the Committee on Territories. Two other proposals were up, one to refer it to a special committee of eleven and the other insisting upon a larger committee of fifteen. A filibuster began which continued throughout the night, and by the time the session was encroaching on early morning the

members, fagged and weary, were in an ugly mood.

Grow, the whip of the Republican Party, watched every move. When a Mississippian, Quitman, asked unanimous consent to make a suggestion, which meant a speech, Grow objected. He wanted voting, not talking. He passed across the Chamber to the Democratic side to confer with Hickman, of Pennsylvania.

Lawrence Keitt was unable to control his quick-boiling anger. He cried out indignantly, "If you want to object, go back to your side of the House, you black Republican puppy!"

Grow defiantly replied, "I will object when and where I please!"

Keitt instantly arose, and followed by Jeff Davis's brother Reuben, approached Grow threateningly. He demanded, "What do you mean by such an answer?"

"I mean just what I said," Grow replied stoutly. "This Hall belongs to the American people. I shall stay in it where I please and no slave-driver shall crack his whip over my head."

Stung by his reply and urged on by Davis, Keitt made a lunge at Grow's throat, and catching hold of his old-fashioned choker,

was about to strike him when Grow, in self-defense, pushed him back and landed a bark-spudder's blow under Keitt's right ear which sent him limp and whipped to the floor.

Great commotion followed, and the entire House was involved at once in a rough-and-tumble fight. Instantly the center aisle in front of the Speaker's desk was packed with an excited crowd. Mob spirit descended; each lawmaker struck a lawless blow wherever opponent could be reached. Republicans rushed to the defense of Grow and Democrats of Keitt.

John Covode, of Pennsylvania, marched down the side aisle with an old earthen cuspidor in his hand.

As he passed Richard Mott, a peace-loving Quaker from Ohio, Mott cried out, "Whither goest thou, Brother John, with thy earthen spittoon?"

"To fight for Grow with this weapon!" shouted Covode, waving the cuspidor on high.

"Peace be with thee, brother," counseled Mott, "but if thou must fight for Galusha, aim thy spittoon well, John, and hit the mark!" And with this he followed Covode into the fight and got badly damaged!

Southern leaders — like Barksdale, Davis, Quitman — rushed up to succor Keitt. Barksdale caught Grow in both arms and “Bowie-knife” Potter, moving through the crowd, striking out right and left, saw Barksdale clinched with Grow, and hauling off, delivered a fierce blow on Barksdale’s back. Grow threw off Barksdale, who, recovering, saw Elihu Washburne handy and grabbed him around the waist.

At this moment Cadwallader Washburn, spying his brother in the arms of Barksdale, struck the Mississippian a glancing blow on the back of the head, knocking off his ponderous wig, which fell to the floor.

The *mêlée* had reached the danger point. Barksdale, who was sensitive about his hairlessness, grabbed up the wig, and in his haste clapped it on bottom side up! The moment the wig landed on the Barksdale pate a roar of laughter burst forth. Every one stopped to look for the cause. The unwigging of Barksdale saved the Chamber what might have been a bloody scene. If the fight had not paused, the bitterness of those days might have led to the production of those firearms which made the House nothing but a concealed arsenal.

In the lull in the rumpus Speaker Orr called loudly for the Sergeant-at-Arms, who had just put Keitt into one of the cloak-rooms. He came, holding his mace above the combatants, and finally restored comparative order; after which, with traces of confusion, the House adjourned.

The next day Keitt apologized to the House:—

It is due to fair dealing that I should assume all responsibility for the act involving a violation of the House, its dignity, and decorum. I was the aggressor and whatever responsibility attached to the act, it properly belongs to me alone. It was, however, casual, sudden, accidental. It is due to justice that I should make whatever reparation is in my power. . . . I do that in the expression of my profound regret at the occurrence. Personal collisions are always unpleasant, seldom excusable, rarely justifiable, and never in a legislative body. If any blow was directed at me I am at least utterly unconscious of having received any.

Before the statement was delivered, Keitt had a mutual friend explain to Grow the purport of the last sentence. Grow was informed that the disclaimer of any knowledge of receiving a blow was simply intended to satisfy the code which required a challenge from a man

if he acknowledged receiving a blow. Grow, regretting the affair and wishing the incident closed, accepted the explanation. He often said laughingly afterwards, however, "I wonder what it was that made Keitt drop!"

As soon as Keitt had made his apology, Grow took the floor and closed the incident: —

. . . At the last sitting of the House I found myself unexpectedly engaged in personal conflict. To the House I tender, most cheerfully, whatever apology is due for this violation of order and decorum.

Northern papers praised Grow for his plucky stand, while Southern journals made excuses for Keitt. The Kansas Free-State settlers, in their enthusiasm at Grow's championing the right to free speech, presented him with a solid gold medal bearing on one side the figure of an uplifted arm with clenched fist, bearing the caption, —

"The First Blow for Freedom"

The European press discussed the incident at length and in various ways, and "Punch," of London (March 6), published the following verse popularly attributed to Oliver Wendell Holmes, at that time in England: —

*A Fragment from the Great American Epic
The Washingtoniad*

Sing, oh, Goddess, the wrath, the untamable dander of
Keitt,
Keitt, of South Carolina, the clear grit, the tall, the
undaunted,
Him that hath whopped his own niggers till Northerners
all unto Keitt
Seem but as niggers — as well as small bits of potatoes.
Late and long was the fight on the constitution of
Kansas.
Daylight passed into dusk, and dusk into lighted gas
lamps —
Still on the floor of the House the heroes continued their
fighting, —
Dry grew palates and tongues with excitement and
expectoration;
Plugs were becoming exhausted — and Representatives
also.
Who led on the war? The Lecompton phalanx?
Grow, hitting straight from the shoulder, the Pennsylv-
ania slasher;
Him followed Hickman and Potter, the Wiry from
Woody Wisconsin;
Washburn stood with his brother, Cadwallader with
Elihu;
Broad Illinois sent the one and Woody Wisconsin the
other.
Mott came, mild as new milk, with gray hair under his
broad brim,
Leaving a first-class location and water privilege near it
Held by his fathers of old on the willow-fringed banks
of Ohio.
Wrathy Covode too I saw, and Montgomery ready for
mischief —

Who against these to the floor led the Lecomptonite
legions?

Keitt and Rube Davis, the "raal hoss" of wild Missis-
sippi;

Craig and "Scorny" McQueen, and Lucius Quintus
Lamar —

These Mississippi sent to the war, "Tri-partite in
uno."

Long waged the warfare of words. It was four in the
morning.

Whittling and expectoration and humor all were ex-
hausted

When Keitt tired of talk; bespoke Rube Davis; "Oh,
Reuben,

Grow's a tarnation blackguard and I'm going to chuck
him!"

Thus said, up to him sprang and loosened his choker;
Squares to go in like a b'ar when the varmint is cornered.

"Come out, Grow," he cried, "you black Republican
puppy;

Come out on the floor like a man and darn my eyes but
I'll show you!"

Him answered straight-hitting Grow, "Wal, now, I
kalkillate, Keitt,

No nigger-driver shall leave his plantation in South
Carolina

Here to crack his cowhide round this child's ear if he
knows it!"

Scarce had he spoke when the hand, the chivalrous fore-
fingers of Keitt

Clutched at his throat! Had they closed, the speech of
Grow had been ended:

Nevermore from a stump had he stirred the free and
enlightened;

But though smart Keitt's moulies, the moulies of Grow
were still smarter.

Straight from the shoulder he shot. Not even Swift or
Ned Adams
Ever put in their right with more delicate feeling of
distance.
As drops the hammer on anvil, so dropped Grow's right
on Keitt
Just where the jugular runs toward the base of the right
ear!
Prone like a log sank Keitt; his dollars rattled around
him
Forth sprang his friends o'er the body; first Barksdale
the wigwearer,
Craig and McQueen and Davis — the "raal hoss" of
wild Mississippi,
Fiercely they gathered round Grow, catawposly, as if
to chew him!
But without Potter they reckoned, — the Wiry from
Woody Wisconsin, —
As, striking out right and left like catamount, varmint
and vicious,
He dashed to the rescue, and with him the Washburns,
Cadwallader and Elihu.
Slick into Barksdale's bread-basket walked Potter's five
knuckles.
Barksdale fetched round in a trice, dropped Grow and
let out Elihu,
Then like a fountain did flow the claret of Washburne
the Elder;
But for Cadwallader's care, — Cadwallader, guard of
his brother, —
Catching at Barksdale's knob into Chancery soon would
have drawn it.
Well it was then for Barksdale the wig that waved o'er
his forehead
Off into Cadwallader's hands came; and the wearer re-
leasing

Leit to the conqueror naught but the scalp of his worthy
opponent!

Meanwhile, hither and thither, a balm on the waters of
trouble,

Moved Mott, mild as new milk, with gray hairs under
his broad brim

Preaching peace to deaf ears and getting considerably
damaged.

Cautious Covode in the rear, as dubious what it might
come to,

Brandished a stone-ware spittoon "'Gainst whoever
might seem to deserve it."

Little mattered to him whether pro- or anti-Lecompton

So he found in the Hall a foeman worthy his "weepon."

So raged this battle of men all into the thick of the mêlée,

When, like the heralds of old, stepped the Sergeant-at-
Arms and the Speaker.

Then order was found and the warriors ceased fighting.

The only description Mr. Grow himself ever
wrote of the episode was the following, found
in a letter to a relative dated February 9,
1858:—

I wrote you this morning about the trouble in
the House. I enclose a "Globe," by which you will
see that the fight is ended and the books are closed.
The telegraphic reports first sent to the Associ-
ated Press were substantially a correct statement
of facts. The free fight that ensued after the first
encounter cannot be described. It was the first
free fight that ever came off in Congress and the
alacrity with which Republicans rushed to the en-
counter took Southern men entirely by surprise.

They have labored under the delusion that Northern men would not fight, but when they saw them, almost *en masse*, rush from one side of the Chamber to the other and join the affray with fists clenched and arms flying, they came to the conclusion that Northern men will fight in a just cause and that with some effect.

Until the admission of Kansas as a free State in January, 1861, five years after the first bill passed the House, Grow earnestly championed the cause of the "Garden State of the West."

CHAPTER XI

ORGANIZING THE FARMERS' FRONTIER

THE realm of adventure in those days was the great empire outside the organized States. Congress, trustee for this romantic domain whither went the energetic and aspiring, was at much pains to determine how to govern properly, from such distance and without sufficient machinery for the direct administration of the law vast areas to which every type of worker¹ was on his way. Civilization went forward in single file and not too peacefully. Partition of the area into Territories and States must be effected; local government must be set up in place of the too short arm of the federal law, and other aids secured.

Grow devoted his best energies to this continental work which was part of the development of the third act of the Homestead drama. It correlated directly to his main passion, the building of the whole expansion policy upon the democratic farm unit. His dynamic force disciplined of some of its crudity, Grow had

¹ Turner, *The Frontier in American History*.

evolved into an admirable helmsman for "the purpose which seems half unconsciously to have dominated the people and their rulers"¹ — a purpose which pushed the frontiers on into the wilds in "one masterful, irresistible expansion."

The heroic pioneer strain in humanity appealed to him more and more strongly, and the farmers' frontier, ever advancing fluidly, wave upon wave, drew upon it. Who, among Americans with native ancestors, does not know by family tradition what frontier life demanded of endurance and red courage? The tale of the grandfather who crossed the dangerous mountain pass to establish a home; of the grandmother who barricaded the stanch log house and defended her babies from the Indians in the absence of her husband by firing from one loophole after another in rapid succession; or of the great-uncle, perhaps, whose amazingly quick, competent organization protected not only his own but community property from the onrush of the prairie fire; — these are our common heritage. They were Grow's actual knowledge. In isolated regions outbreaks of anarchy, bloodshed, and cruelty were not infrequent,

¹ Colquhoun, *Greater America*.

where men were tempted "to ride the range in glorious indifference to law."¹

Grow set himself to do what he could at the difficult task of finding means of protection for these brave spirits in the unorganized domain. Believing the establishment of overland mail routes to be one cheap and good means, opening surer and quicker communication, he made a strong fight for them. Concentrated settlement, however, was the main desideratum to assure defense, the centers of organized government offering a natural stronghold. Minnesota, Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, and Washington, and the States of California and Texas were already on the map. The rest of the exhaustless West was just being measured up and platted, and Grow, the surveyor, good at "metes and bounds," entered a familiar field. Besides three additional Territories blocked out he personally reported bills for four more: Chippewa, which was to have been cut out along the northern route where the Blackfeet, Sioux, and other Indians menaced the mouth of the Yellowstone; Dakota, Idaho (this name to replace its nickname "Pike's Peak" and signifying "Gem of the Mountain"), and Arizona.

¹ Emerson Hough, *Esau in Search of a Home*.

These he regarded as infant States; they were to be equipped with constitutions and provided with laws.

The opposition to the further formation of Territories was very strong. Reactionaries held that dependencies, Territories, had no business under the Stars and Stripes. One of the gentlemen who frequently led in obstructing Grow at this time was the chairman of the Committee on Public Lands, Thayer. He believed only in the formation of sovereign States; whenever territorial measures were up there was tit-for-tat between him and Grow. On one occasion the Dakota organization bill was under discussion. Thayer's private business was in railroad equipment. Unexpectedly, he moved to lay the measure on the table.

"Not so fast!" protested Mr. Grow. "The gentleman from Massachusetts is so used to carry his engines into these new countries that he is all for locomotion!"

Later Grow put through the bill which created the Territory of Nevada. By 1859 Oregon was admitted as a State and the eastern part attached to Washington as a Territory; the State of Minnesota was formed, and Nebraska, Kansas, and Indian Territories recognized.

Before he left Congress all but four of our present States were cut out by boundaries.

But it was not only lack of organization which was crippling the West. Grow watched speculation, his *bête noir*, go forward more and more successfully. The Commissioner of the General Land Office reported that a very considerable portion if not the greater part of the entries for cultivation and settlement under the Graduation Act of 1854 had been made by unscrupulous individuals in direct contravention of the law. The Secretary of the Interior prophesied that the act would become a fruitful source of annoyance and loss. Cobb's substitute for the Homestead proposal was thus a complete failure.

Not only did speculative capitalists buy outright, but they pushed forward "colorable" settlers into the lands which had not been offered for public sale and later bought them out. Either by the misrepresentations of speculators or the inadvertence of authorities public sales had been ordered before the line of settlement had fairly reached the land, and thus the speculators had been able to keep in advance, picking out choice lands in quantities to retail at a largely advanced price or to hold

back from improvement for years. This was the result of our mistaken policy of allowing land to be sold at auction to the highest bidder. The speculators preyed upon squatters who were forced to leave. With ready cash they bought the cream of the areas offered — until preëmptors began to rebel.

The organization of this rebellion was picturesque enough. In various parts of the West, wherever enough settlers had congregated, they spiritedly formed township associations which were offensive and defensive leagues. They proceeded to make their own rules for the auctions. First they registered all the occupied tracts in the name of the men entitled to them with their association secretary, listing doubtful or fraudulent holders as such. Then the whole membership of the association turned out at the sales, fully armed. The crowd bristled with pistols and bowie knives. The spokesmen intimated to land-grabbers, on pain of physical damage, that honest applicants were to be served first when they bid upon land. Under the circumstances, second choice being preferable to loss of life, the hint was usually effective.

After the settlers were through, the land-

pirates took their turn, however. The old saying, "This will be a great country when we get it all fenced in!" was their slogan. They frequently gobbled up all the "next best" country, and dealt largely in land warrants and scrip. Large districts in Iowa, for instance, swept in by capitalists, remained like a desert waste, in sharp comparison to areas just across the line in Minnesota where the land was not brought upon the market, but where the homestead principle was in effect applied. There every section had its good citizens upon it cultivating. The Middle West suffered greatly.

The longer any new plan could be postponed the better for the land-grabbers. In opposition to homestead, they favored reduction of the requirements of occupancy and procurement of permission to take up a thousand acres at minimum cost. The more commonage donated to old soldiers the better, for that came on the market cheap. The sentimental "old-soldier" plea was a wonderful fence behind which to do almost anything. Paying soldiers' pensions "in kind" was a favorite dissipation of government resources and meant invariably a good big job lot of choice bits on the "land bargain counter."

Mr. Grow once freed his mind vigorously in regard to the act passed in 1855. He said on the floor of the House, ungracious as was the task of refusing a request made in the name of those who had given valiant service, that while professing to benefit old soldiers, it was in fact only speculators who would feel the results of such legislation. Mexican land-warrants sold for sixty to seventy-five dollars apiece. Throwing upon the market a large territory to be scrambled for visited consequent evils upon the new States.

The state of the public mind as to the situation of preëmtors was very clear. The land was common property belonging to all the people,¹ but it was generally held that each individual citizen was a joint owner in it. The popular belief concerning land and labor was that a citizen going to the commonage was conferring benefit upon the Government. He was an asset to the Government merely in his presence upon the lands. Working the lands, he was bestowing upon the soil labor which was his own. This the Government had no right to sell. They protested the right of the Government to dispose of their improvements.

¹ Henry George, *Land and Land Policy*.

They demanded some settlement of the matter which would afford substantial recognition of the value of their labor and provide, if price were to attach, kindly conditions of payment which allowed for the innumerable difficulties of acquiring money. The host of preëmtors were quite generally men of low means.

An extraordinary condition came to pass, therefore. Millions of acres were not brought into market at all, even though surveyed, not because the Government was under any impression that the land would hereafter sell at a better price, but because each year must *lessen* (under the Graduation and Reduction Act) the number of acres which could be subjected to disposal at the *highest* remunerative price! The moment the President ordered lands placed upon the market moneyless preëmtors howled loudly, for that meant that they were more than likely to lose their homes on the date of the auction.

The outcry that honest settlers were being sacrificed, sold out and turned out by the Government in favor of capitalists or for the benefit of the greatest speculator of all, the Government itself, was megaphoned through the country, creating an agitation so over-

whelming that great bodies of public land had stood waiting, and from 1856 on the money which should have come into the Treasury from sales had not been available. Against such strong public sentiment any executive would have been courageous to act; Buchanan was of no mind to do so.

Against the President's policy of inaction Grow threw himself repeatedly. He fought in varied ways, but it was always for a free folkland. He had persistently iterated two safeguards for the domain aside from the homestead; its reservation for actual settlers (proposed as early as 1836 by R. J. Walker) and the prevention of the sale of public lands until they should have been in the market fifteen years, which would give settlers a favorable start over land-grabbers. Both were becoming more patently necessary every day. He tried the first in a separate bill, which failed. His persistence was continually tested. If he won on minor points, — as for instance the extension of the land laws east of the Cascade Mountains in Washington and Oregon, — he was continually balked of the essential thing he wanted — “ploughs, babies, homes, and freedom.”¹

¹ Emerson Hough, *Esau in Search of a Home*.

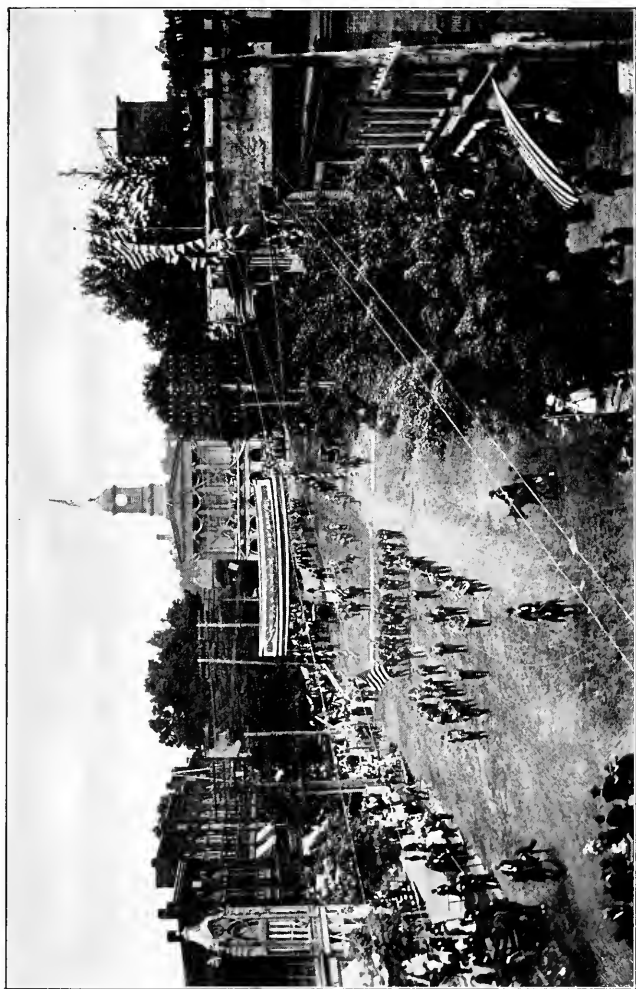
He again introduced the Homestead Bill in 1856, being so confident of its soundness that no defeat dismayed him. An effort to side-track it, after he had reported it out of the Territorial Committee, by sending it to his other committee, Agriculture, did not succeed. But when the measure came up for discussion in the House, hot attacks typical of period and opponents recurred. Denounced as the crown of demagogism, the first step to communism and socialism, as being profuse, indiscriminate, and likely to stir other classes to demand compensating advantages, it had to combat what was in reality a rampant war spirit. Grow probably could have put through a limited bill, but he was not satisfied to propose one only partially competent; therefore conclusive action was practically impossible.

There is always a stage when a long-fought measure, frequently introduced and never completely successful, has as little appeal as a troublesome, much-beaten, but "stick-to-it-ive" puppy who hangs about expecting further chastisement. Obstinate Grow continued to propose his plan for "morseling out" the domain in the following sessions. The homestead proposition could not be forced through and it

seemed to be a forlorn hope, but Grow stuck by it gallantly — proof that his passion was both ardent and persistent. He was not to be discouraged in his attempt to express in his own way the strong idealistic impulse of the nation.

His fight had another side, defensive. This period was one of deep financial depression; labor felt bad conditions painfully; many men were out of work. To a considerable number it seemed that the land should be doubly a solvent in time of stress and give bread and occupation to all. Many expedients were up, to amend the Graduation and Preëmption Acts, to secure various types of grants, to provide subsidies for agriculture. From 1856 on Grow was constantly exerting himself to defeat the passage of legislation which would tend at best merely to ameliorate a situation which called for direct and fundamental action.

With patience and power and judgment he conservatively and wisely bided his time. Doggedly watching for a good opportunity to concentrate on the real thing, he did a good grist of general business — so good a grist that one day when he put through six motions it was petulantly cried that he had had his share!



THE GROW WELCOME HOME AT MONTROSE, PENNSYLVANIA, 1903

The House was somewhat at loggerheads; Grow's party was young and jockeying for advantage. In 1858, while he proposed the homestead again, it was obviously futile to push the House very far toward the accomplishment of his main project; but he was there with it, persistently proposing.

Andrew Johnson, elected to the Senate after a term as Governor of Tennessee, brought an unlesened enthusiasm for his own sort of land policy. He realized quite as well as Grow that the homestead conception was no psychological illusion, but a real pregnancy of the nation; upon this pre-birth period depended the character of the legislative offspring of which the country must be delivered.

There was the widest difference between Grow's and Johnson's perceptions, however. As Johnson's ideas stood there was never a chance for the vision which Grow saw, of providing for all souls a great homogeneous land system which would carry down the years, which would keep the Federal Government supreme arbiter of the policies of the whole people, and which would serve to spread throughout the country to its remotest corners the healthy yeast of a democratic spirit. Grow

felt imperatively that the narrow interests of the States were of secondary importance; that to plan land disposition to keep these States distinct and decentralized would be to give strength to the fast augmenting discontent among them; and finally, that to leave to the discretion of each and any Commonwealth the determination of the fate of that part of the domain which should fall outside the classification of land subject to private entry would be a fatal mistake.

Johnson was both earnest and ardent; but he was a presidential aspirant. Furthermore his conception had never expanded beyond its early outlines; in brief, to donate free of cost only areas subject to private entry among heads of families, *providing* they were naturalized citizens at the time of the passage of the bill. With his adherence to the politics of the ruling party in his favor, he again introduced his Homestead Bill; but, recognizing that the South had no intention of allowing any measure to go through which cut off revenues, he narrowed his plan still further and robbed it of its donation character altogether, adding a price of forty dollars an acre. At a much later date he himself affirmed that he had always

looked forward to the day when the bulk of the public domain should be surrendered to the States. The preëmption and graduation measures were fixed upon the country; the Homestead Bill was to consummate them; he stated that he viewed this whole scheme as mere preliminaries to this surrender.

At this time, however (1858), he did not discuss federal rights or the final disposition of the domain; he urged only that Congress should gratify in a harmless way the popular demand for homesteads. It was certainly high time for action. State legislatures and even Congress itself had been debauched by the prevailing system of grants; the public lands were principally prizes for plunder. But the South was no nearer listening to reason on the matter, and in the extremely good debate which occurred on the bill, the stand-pat Democrats developed a new line of attack to defeat action.

"It is no time to be dispensing revenues," said their Senators. "The North wants to give away the public lands so that federal revenue will be reduced and the tariff must be raised to meet the expenses of government." The inference was that the North being the manufacturing section, protected industries would

benefit. Among Democrats this was discussed as "a little game," and they were ready zealously to protect the South against such imposition. An ingenious argument, Northern leaders showed that it was not water-tight; if Eastern Senators had favored the bill for such a secondary reason, it would have been primarily too dangerous a way to effect an end. The South had power to retaliate by placing a tax on articles on the free list.

Aristocratic Democrats continually attacked homesteaders with the gloriously long-lived song of agrarianism, who defended agrarians as patriots, bold, unflinching advocates of human rights. "The principle involved in this bill," said the Republican Hale, "is one that has divided free democratic principles and aristocratic government for all past time. History has not been written by democrats. . . . Those agrarians who for thousands of years have been denounced as foes of property and of popular right and social order were in fact the only true friends of conservative popular liberty that the Republic of Rome ever saw, and all on earth they contended for was a fair and equal distribution of the public lands."

"Postponement," some one remarked, "is

the easiest way to kill Senators' pet bantlings." The South determined upon this, and therefore encouraged much waste motion. Johnson chafed: his confrères were by no means overpolite to him. He had claimed the credit for having been earliest identified with the homestead. Clay, of Alabama, deliberately tried to place him in a discreditable light by asserting that to General McConnell of his own State was due the "honor" of having proposed to give one hundred and sixty acres to every head of a family in the United States, "man, matron, or maid." Johnson's refutation of his statements took time, therefore filling with satisfaction the majority who intended to defer action. Adjournment overtook them without a decision.

It was the following Congresses which saw the most dramatic moments of the homestead action, in which were involved the most vital controversies of that fateful period. Grow was third in the Speakership contest in 1859, acknowledged one of the strong men of the House, yet the times were so precarious that strategy was necessary for nearly any plan in hand. Public demonstrations were being held to urge definite legislation. Grow summoned

all his forces and launched the Homestead Bill in the House, combined with his two safeguards to put an end finally to speculation.

He had a short but strenuous fight. He found feeling sufficiently averse to the section he had added providing that the land should not be sold for fifteen years after survey to cause him, intent on getting results, to withdraw it rather than expose the whole measure to defeat. Despite doughty opposition to the alien proclivities of the bill and keen States' rights agitation, Grow's tactical skill and management sent the approved bill to the Senate.

Upon Johnson, Grow's bill acted like a challenge, and although he did not obviously pick up the glove, at this point commenced a tug of war between the two men which, never pointedly personal, was undisguised. A contest impended. Which was to have first chance to dictate the terms to be discussed?

Johnson reported the House measure out of the Committee on Public Lands without amendment. There was no general welcome. The Cuban Bill was already in, and this bore an immensely important relation to the Homestead Bill. Two other homestead bills were already up, Johnson's, revived after its dis-

couraging experience the year before, and one reposing on a side track in committee. Wade moved to take up the House measure the 17th of February. Johnson's own bill was on the calendar, and he promptly stated that he felt "its details were better matured," but he gave way to consideration of the House proposal because the "idea was more or less similar." In reality a bill coming up from the House was usually given precedence in consideration; Wade's motion passed by two votes. Johnson was of no mind to help him, and Democrats, bent on swift defeat, began to mass against the bill. After several dilatory motions for which the South voted almost as a man, Senator Hunter (our old Virginia friend, author of Hunter's substitute in 1854) proposed that the Wade motion be set aside. The vote was 28 to 28, whereupon Vice-President Breckinridge, leaving the chair, voted in the affirmative. The Homestead Bill was for that day and session done for, although attempts were made to resuscitate it.

The Cuban Bill, for reasons both objective and subjective, obstructed the path of the homestead measure. It countered in practical purpose and it expressed one side of the ethical

problem. Senator Slidell, of Louisiana, succeeded in getting prior orders postponed on the 25th of February in order that the project to purchase Cuba for \$30,000,000 might be taken up. At ten o'clock that night Senator Doolittle, of Wisconsin, moved to set aside the Cuban measure and consider the Grow bill. In the skirmish the keynote difficulty was struck again. Mr. Grow writes: —

I remember well Wade's encounter with Robert Toombs while this point was being discussed. The fiery Georgian was supporting it in a long-winded speech. He denounced the Republican Senators as demagogues who stood in awe and fear of the "lacklanders" of the North. This was more than fighting Ben Wade could endure. He sat near Toombs and springing to his feet he faced the Georgian and roared full in his face, —

"Are we afraid, sir? Do you mean to say, sir, that we are afraid? There is no man or thing on God's footstool that I am afraid of."

Toombs paled and said quietly, "I except the Senator from my remarks."

"If you want to take it back you can," cried Wade; and then proceeded with a strong speech using these words, "We gladly accept the issue which the Senator from Georgia presents and will go to the people on it: Land for the Landless and Niggers for the Niggerless!"

The motion to take up the Homestead Bill

once more was lost by ten votes and the Senate went on to consider Buchanan's pet scheme. The Ostend Conference, of which he was head, had advised forcible seizure of the island if negotiations failed. Had Cuba been acquired by the United States at any time before 1860 it would have been followed by the repeal of the law which made African slave trade piracy.

Said Alexander Stephens, the South "could not keep up the race with the North in the occupation of new territory unless they could get more Africans." The desire for the additional political power of two new Senators from slave soil made the fight on Cuba bitter. At this short session, however, the Senate was impotent alike on Cuba and the homestead. But once more it was made dramatically clear how inextricably land and slavery issues were interwoven.

CHAPTER XII

A STATES' RIGHTS PLAN PASSES

THE pulse of the nation, quickened by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the tariff, the Kansas fight, the Dred Scott decision, now beat tumultuously at the mere mention of land. Yet in land policy lay the last chance of reaching a solution of great sectional differences, and all ardent land men were incited to fresh patriotic endeavors. The full blast of oratory and dialectic, covering all the ground ever traversed in previous Congresses and much that was new on the homestead, came during that restless, bitter, hysterical Congress (1860) when the very heart of the nation was heavy with emotion and the body politic strained to the breaking of endurance. As the homestead theme evolved, the background became more effective and complex.

At Grow's urging, Owen Lovejoy, who was now chairman of the House Committee on Public Lands, reported out the Homestead Bill early. The House was strongly in favor of the measure, but its old foes still tried to table it

at its third reading. They failed and it passed without debate, the same simple measure embracing 1,400,000,000 broad acres, purposing to encourage and protect settlement and assuming unquestionable authority in the National Government to dispose of land for internal improvement.

Grow knew that the test of real principles was due, for the Democrats in the Senate continued to crack the whip. It was a dilemma with branched horns that had to be faced. Upon the upholding of States' rights rested questions of allowing capitalists to become land barons, of the maintenance of a traditional source of government revenue, and of expansion of slavery into the new terrain. Upon the recognition of federal powers rested the establishment of a highly socialized method of land partition among individuals; of the creation of a far greater income by investment in population; and greatest of all, Freedom.

Johnson had introduced his own measure into the Senate, and debate was somewhat advanced when the House bill arrived. As a member of the Democratic Committee on Public Lands he had influence on Grow's proposal. By some accident or intention the

condition in which this bill was reported out was obscure. Wade at once asked that the customary courtesy of immediate consideration be shown the House measure and gave reasons for preferring it. Johnson protested, this time at giving precedence.

Wade did not know it, but he had been forestalled anyhow. Johnson, sure that he had the not entirely disfavoring eyes of Southern Democrats on his measure at last, since the Senators from the old States had received specific instructions from their districts to sustain remedial legislation of some sort, wished quite naturally to dictate what compromise, if any, should be made, and to be identified with the measure which passed. He was sincerely interested, too, in harmonizing sectional opinions. He held that the Union was indissoluble, — a remarkable opinion for a man of the South, — but he was also convinced that the Constitution secured to States certain rights as well. Asserting that the powers of the Federal Government must be circumscribed, he naturally had no marked sympathy for Grow's bill. Therefore his committee had emasculated it before reporting; had struck out the body of the House proposition and substituted their

own. The two bills were now identical, so that it would appear that there remained only the question of order which should first be considered.

Wade, when he discovered what had been done, lost no time in defeating this attempt to annul Grow's measure. He called the Senate's attention to the fact that it now became a question of agreeing to the amendment and that the friends of the Grow bill, which meant all Republicans, should vote against it. After a little discussion he moved, in retaliation, to strike out the body of the Senate measure and substitute the House bill.

At this point rose up his colleague and his pet detestation, George E. Pugh, follower of Andrew Johnson, to pour oil on troubled waters — his habit, most objectionable from Wade's point of view, but in this instance not unuseful. Pugh thought, by way of striking a bargain, that it would be better to consider the Grow bill as it had come from the House, without amendment, and so leave the Senate measure in its present status. Upon this consideration Wade withdrew his motion.

Always, in this phase of the homestead's career, Wade and Pugh faced each other like

opposing lawyers in a sensational case. Wade thought Pugh the most noted "doughface" in the upper House, in constant collusion with Southern sympathizers. "Old Ben Wade" was himself as loyal as a watchdog, and he disliked indirection. Once, when he was particularly tried with Pugh, he exclaimed to Grow, "When listening to the Senator from my State I have wondered why the God Almighty did not make some persons spaniels instead of men!"

Pugh's judgment, however colored, was frequently astute, and his settlement in this case made the condition of both bills interesting. The presiding officer stated that as motions had now been made to strike out the body of each bill and amend with the other, both would be open to amendment before the vote was taken on substituting one for the other. Pugh knew that this was Senate practice, although not necessarily good, and it had the advantage of keeping the matter fluid temporarily. In only one particular did Pugh take exception to the Johnson plan; he said that in regard to admission of immigrants it was not even so liberal as the preëmption laws; in this alone did he stand with Wade.

Johnson was roused by Wade's vigorous

leadership, well planned to make him a deal of trouble. With devotion to his own bill he declared feelingly that it held the first principles of government, was founded on statesmanship, humanity, and even Christianity itself. From his point of view, as that of the best States' rights men, it would strengthen, not weaken, the bonds of the Union! He believed that a limited homestead operation would secure a better voting population and that the assurance of land to the hitherto unpropertied would make a large difference in the attitude of the country toward slavery, because "just as soon as men become interested in property so will they become reconciled to the institutions of property." He declared that all that was really material was contained in the measure he advanced, and that any friend of the homestead principle, when he could get the substance of that proposition, was not acting in good faith if he gave to the bill that direction which would defeat it. He championed it as a proposal which was not sectional. He wanted to be sustained in his proposal to strike out all after the enacting clause in Grow's bill and substitute his own.

His argument, while charmingly delivered,

was, as we have seen, not justified so far as the true homestead character of the measure and the basic intent of federal improvement was concerned. However, at this juncture came a warning. Green, of Indiana, who was known to be in touch with the President, declared that it made no difference which bill was considered, as neither would become a law until the President had signed it — a veto hint — although he disclaimed authority—which was disquieting to both factions. Green himself was reactionary, a preëmtioner who wanted strengthening of these laws alone. He said that the Graduation Law intended to benefit the new States had proved a curse to all States; and he fought both homestead propositions, particularly upon the ground that the Government had no right to exempt lands from taxation after donation.

Furious discussion jerked the House measure all over the field. "Nationalism is a disease from which we are all suffering!" cried a Southerner in exasperation. "The Government should have its patronage and land offices broken up. Land should be under the disposition of the States alone!" Upon this psychological cue a substitute for both bills

was submitted which would have ceded the lands to the States, reinforcing a resolution to that effect already in.

Senator Doolittle, of Wisconsin, fatefully dumped much fat on the fire. He blew mightily on the flaming hatreds which were consuming the upper House. He injected red-hot abolition coals beneath his new fuel. He turned the attention of the South to the traditional "cullud pusson" who inhabit the national woodpile. He suggested that homesteads be given to negroes in the South. He blithely submitted his views as to the settlement of the whole race problem, outlining the three solutions offered up to that time. The first was the unconditional emancipation of slaves "*by force, it may be, to remain on a footing of equality with the white race.*" The second, which might be termed "the solution of Southern fanaticism," looked to the acquisition of Cuba, Mexico, Central America — in fact, to all tropical America and the reopening of the slave trade. So, he said, planned slave propagandists or "Knights of the Golden Circle." The third, which he deemed the only wise and practical one, proposed by Jefferson, concurred in and sustained by Washington, Madison,

Clay, and Jackson, looked to the time when the colonization and deportation of the emancipated race should take place.

He used such unfortunate expressions as that he was "utterly opposed to the amalgamation of races," and discussing at length the Dred Scott decision, declared that it did not establish the right to extend slavery, which was a Southern claim. Worst of all, supposedly arguing for the Homestead Bill, he called it "a measure of empire," maintaining that without the negro question it must be easily settled.

"A measure of empire!" It was the phrase of the session. The South caught it up as a gauntlet flung down. Antagonistic spirits in the Democratic ranks seized upon Doolittle's haphazard, preposterous, but impressive speech as the real feeling of the North. It was Mason, firebrand from Virginia, who flared at once, replying rapidly that the Senator from Wisconsin had shed a great deal of light on the subject when he showed the Homestead Bill as a means by which the North intended to assure itself "command and control of the destinies of the continent. . . . It is part of this 'measure of empire' to connect, as belonging indissolubly to it, the whole slavery question

with the homestead policy." He boldly intimated that the North was trying to sequester territory so that the South, which would never learn to farm upon one hundred and sixty acres, would be defrauded of its share of the Western land of promise. He apparently arraigned Johnson as much as Grow, calling the Tennessean's attention to the fact that his bill was being used by the North; and, exploding with passion, declared that in this proposal to give land to the landless and providing homes for men "who will never occupy them" was concealed "a political engine and a potent one" for a battering attack upon the very existence of the South.

The air was charged with electrical antipathies. Despite the fact that he did not approve at all of rampant attitudes and bitter speeches, fearful lest they should react to defeat his purpose, Johnson commented tartly: "Round and round this slavery agitation have we gone until our heads are reeling and our stomachs sick. . . . If some Senator from the South were to introduce the Lord's Prayer or . . . the Ten Commandments for consideration, some one would find a negro in it somewhere!"

Continuing sarcastically that he was grati-

fied to hear the Senator from Virginia confess that for once at least since he had been in the Senate he had had a flood of light shed on his mind, Johnson devoted himself to showing that Mason, opposing the homestead now, had voted without prejudice for a territorial homestead grant for Kansas and Nebraska in 1854; and furthermore that he had permitted the act to pass in bad English. Whereupon Mason, not denying the impeachment, interjected a comment that he would admit that the bad English was a mistake! In a continued endeavor to undo the evil effects of the Doolittle-Mason type of speech Johnson made numerous controversial statements. He quoted the President in favor of immigration and regretted that the measure should be taking a party direction, declaring that the homestead idea was Democratic and could not be claimed by Republicans.

The facts did not justify this. The measure had no party color until 1853; then, as is shown by Grow's position in the House, it was distinctively Free-Soil Democratic until that faction split from the organization and formed the Republican Party, after which time the Democrats became strongly anti-homestead. Now,

at least, after arduous work to postpone definition of a land policy year after year, the disconcerting success of Republicanism caused Democrats to see that settlement of the issue was not only politic but imperative. They *must* to the rightabout!

The effect, to use Viscount Bryce's description of a later parallel situation, was similar to having the Jews enter singing "Onward! Christian soldiers!" But the land question having now become a sectional question, the Democrats were greatly puzzled. The wise among them knew that with feeling at heat it was by no means the best time to demand the total programme they wished to execute. They would have preferred partial, temporizing measures; but the situation pressed them hard.

Pugh proposed to try out the sentiment of the Senate by a motion to strike out the enacting clause of Grow's bill. This failed; the conservative Democrats resolved to take matters into their own hands. Robert W. Johnson, of Arkansas, astute politician, now as in 1854, mouthpiece of the stand-patters of the party, came forward. He moved that both measures be referred to the Committee on Public Lands,

with definite directions to report back with recommendations at an early date.

Wade was watching closely: every inch of congressional rope was under dispute and every advantage must be conserved. But it was soon clear that the proposal was made in good faith, and knowing that the Democrats had the whip hand anyhow, and that his minority position was only strong enough to obstruct or eventually perhaps to effect a compromise, he deemed it wise to acquiesce in the arrangement.

Promptly the committee came in to report. Both Johnsons were on it. Andrew Johnson took occasion to say that the bill which they were bringing in "had passed through an ordeal to which in all his experience he had never seen the equal." They brought back neither the Senate nor House measure, but a compromise.

Robert Johnson, very proud, stated that he believed that they had obtained what he had not thought it possible to attain, a point in common between the two parties while Governor Johnson preserved his idea; that it would be satisfactory not only to the old States, but to the population and those in charge of the

Government itself, since (in distinction from Grow's bill) it was a measure productive of order and symmetry in all its connection with the land system.

There is no doubt that with every sincerity the two Johnsons had tried to settle this matter, although they could not avoid the twists of their own bias. Andrew Johnson knew that the chances of passage were precarious unless he left the terms of compromise largely in the hands of the other Johnson. Robert Johnson, with his convictions, probably could not see that there was every reason of expediency and ultimate principle why the measure they brought in could not be acceptable to true homesteaders. His own exposition of it showed that it was a plausible further approach, more grasping than the Senate bill, to what the South had most at heart, the strengthening of States' rights — not even an approximation of what the House wanted, but a retrogression from it. The main intent was concealed in its final section. First a graduation of the price of lands was maintained, homesteads were offered only in 60,000,000 acres already surveyed; a totally new provision never before incorporated in any bill required the President to expose all

public lands at auction two years after their survey ; finally, it was provided that *title to the entire remaining commonage was to pass after thirty years to the States.*

Fight was resumed at once. Grow's friends were astonished and not very hopeful. Amendments, however, cut the air like razors at a traditional darky celebration. Circumlocution prevailed until Republicans could best see how to move. One of the serious objections on the score of expediency was that the committee of Democrats, believing that preëptors had already been indulged and desiring to show them no favor, had decided squatters should pay full price for the lands, although they were to be allowed a credit of two years. It was inadequate provision. Hosts were already at the West. A thousand persons every day crossed the Missouri to select home spots from the gaping lands beyond.

Douglas, true to his instinct, proposed to take a politicianly middle of the road. He was in favor of some price attaching, but he submitted an amendment to enlarge the compromise to include sale of all lands subject to preemption, so that the agricultural section of the whole domain would be thrown open as needed

and the preëmtor might buy on the same terms as the settler, at twenty-five cents an acre, something more valuable than "practically worthless knobs and swamps," but the speculator would still have to pay a dollar and a quarter an acre.

Johnson of Arkansas, the chief exponent and defender of his own compromise, fought Douglas vigorously, displaying the limitations of his sympathy. A scattering of our population over an immense surface, an unnatural stimulus to immigration, a disarrangement of the progress of public surveys, — these and many other objections he urged. "What," he demanded also, "is the responsibility of this Government when, by this same policy, down goes the value of railroad grants upon which the States have contracted heavy debts, and what assistance will the public lands be to the Pacific Railroad?"

Jefferson Davis also spoke against Douglas's plan significantly and brilliantly, defining the two great principles, as he saw them, running through our land policy; first to abridge as much as possible the period within which the Federal Government should exercise control over land within the States; second, to hasten

the development of the new country. We were, in his view, about to depart from the principle upon which the preëmption system rested, reverting to the idea of eventual state ownership, which would make the adoption of Douglas's amendment a fatal mistake! It did not pass.

In spite of the body of Democrats favoring the committee compromise, Mason, still rancored, expressed the opinion of the extreme Southern opposition when he bewailed the fact that the Senate compromise was only better than the Grow bill because it preserved "some wretched form of constitutional right — all that seemed to be left of the Constitution, as its substance was gone."

Wade still had it in his mind to call up the old House bill. A vote was approaching on the somewhat amended compromise when he moved to strike out all after the enacting clause and substitute Grow's bill. Andrew Johnson appealed to him to withdraw the motion; Senators did not want to put themselves on record as altogether against the House provisions, and although personally he would have liked the compromise to be more liberal, the thing to do was to get a vote. Johnson did

not ask, "What is ideal?" but, "What are we sure to get?" Wade insisted, anxious for a test of strength. The motion failed; but all the voting about this time was exceedingly close.

An attempt to strike out section eleven, ceding the lands to States, also failed, but the South did not feel any too well enforced with votes. There was an unusual to-do about absentees. The House has a "call" for occasions when the attendance is bad; the Senate was obliged to move that the Sergeant-at-Arms "request" the presence of Senate members. That such a motion passed now was evidence of sheer nervous tension and deep watchfulness.

Wade once more made a valiant attempt to get what he called a "homestead" bill, but unavailingly. Although not very many votes were needed to carry it and Wade was somewhat inclined to fight for a postponement until the next session, the general opinion was that the Senate bill had better be accepted even at its worst because the need for some united action between the North and South was so desperate. Although the compromise was not satisfactory, the anxiety concerning peace and incidentally the modicum of actual relief for

settlers caused many Senators to feel that it was best to vote in favor of it.

The compromise passed. Jefferson Davis made clear acknowledgment that the measure had become almost devoid of its homestead idea. He suggested that the title be changed to "A bill amendatory of the several acts for the disposal of the public domain and to perfect the existing system thereof." Andrew Johnson, however, wished to retain the homestead caption, and out of deference to him Davis's exact description was not applied.

The changeling measure went to the House for action (May 21). There followed an out-and-out quarrel between the two branches of Congress. Grow did not wish to submit to this successful maneuver by the opposition, and the House returned the bill to the Senate amended to its original form. It was kept waiting some little time, and then the Senate refused to concur. "You shall take what we sent you!" said they. The House still refused, and on May 30 sent a message to the Senate that they insisted on the amendments, but asked for a committee of conference. The Senate retorted that it insisted on its disagreements, but appointed the two Johnsons and Harlan as conferees.

Grow, Thomas, and Lovejoy were the three appointed by the House. The resulting meetings were not marked by harmony! Andrew Johnson quite well understood the attitude of the Republicans and was temperamentally suited to arbitration. But Johnson of Arkansas, the framer of the States' rights substitute, had no sympathy whatever with Grow, and to him the demands of the House members for their own sort of a measure seemed entirely exacting and intolerant. He declared with the injustice of heat that they must have the intent of coercing the President to veto the measure for its political effect. This was not true, but Grow was not happy — Robert Johnson was always getting in his way!

Possibly personal contact made the tug of war between the two ideas at stake unbearable. Grow reported to the House, at any rate, that after "full and free" conference the committee had separated without coming to any agreement. In the Senate Andrew Johnson did likewise, stating that if the House wanted another conference they must ask for it. Thereupon the House, insisting on its disagreement, did ask for another conference, and Grow significantly suggested the appointment of new conferees.

The second delegation still could not reach an agreement, and June 15 again so reported. With the exception of Andrew Johnson the personnel of the conference committee was once more changed, and the third conference sat. After twelve meetings of three different excited conferences, Colfax reported to the House and Johnson to the Senate on June 19 that the committee had finally agreed.

In brief, the Senate yielded only in minor matters, although some of these were important. The upper House maintained its position in regard to the ultimate absorption of the domain by the States and the graduated price of lands. The main concessions which the Senate yielded were the enlargement of the scope of the area to include all odd-numbered sections of the surveyed domain which had not been open to public sale. Heads of families after five years' occupancy were allowed to purchase quarter-sections at twenty-five cents an acre. Instead of the full price of lands, preëmtors were to get them at half price—sixty-two and a half cents—after free tenancy for six months. The clause which made it imperative upon the President to expose all unsurveyed lands to sale within two years

after survey (which would have been particularly advantageous to experienced buyers with cash and eventually to the States) was struck out.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread," said Grow resignedly. He had to remember that bills are usually sad compromises; but he was very emphatic to his friends, when the House consented to pass this unsatisfactory substitute, that he would have the measure up for amendment if the President signed it.

Nor was the Senate content! Johnson of Arkansas protested that he would never have voted for it if it had been proposed as amended. Because the House got its half loaf thereby!

It went to the President. Here lay a chance to heal the breach. Everybody waited anxiously. As usual it returned with Buchanan's veto. As Green had intimated, the President probably would have negatived it in any shape. His timidity in doing even that which his party approved is characteristic. On the same grounds that he had earlier objected to the turnover of swamp lands, he opposed this. The present transfer of twelve million acres of the domain to the States and the involved further transfer of much more later disquieted him.

Grow, analyzing the President's veto, found that in general none of his reasons for refusal were well taken. Constitutional reasons were outworn traditions. Buchanan charged that the bill would prove unjust and unequal in operation among the actual settlers themselves, yet the only support for his argument was his belief that the Government might not reduce the price of property without refunding to the first buyers. There was no defense for his plea of injustice to old soldiers; warrants had been made assignable and the Government's obligation was practically void. Equally his protests against class legislation, injustice to mechanics, and discrimination between persons claiming the benefit of the preëmption laws were insupportable in fair argument.

His idea that the bill would open a vast field for speculation while laying the axe at the root of "our present admirable land system" — when one knows the facts about that land system — was not destined to increase one's admiration for the logic of him who advanced it. The remaining criticisms were no more competent: that the bill was not consistent with the duty of maintaining perfect equality between the native-born and the naturalized

citizen, and that it would have a restrictive effect on public revenues. Even the enemies of the act had shown that direct revenues must increase, since land was not to be a gift but simply reduced in price, and to be abandoned to the States as worthless at the end of thirty years if it was not then sold. The truth was that Buchanan was unwilling to act at all. His alignment with the most reactionary among the Democrats made him blind to the last real opportunity to call a halt in the ominous march of affairs by effecting a change in the land situation.

Andrew Johnson, in the Senate, in his usual calm way declared that his opinion upon the measure was not in the least affected by the decision of the President and that he still believed in the bill. Wade attempted to bring the proposition up for another vote so that it might be passed over the veto, but he was defeated by Johnson of Arkansas, who could prevent a two-thirds vote.

In retrospect it seems marvelously lucky that Buchanan did not see his blunder. It was only by so narrow a fluke that the South lost this trick and we were spared acknowledgment of States' rights. Repeal or amendment after

a law is once through is not always possible with party changes, and this act would have been particularly difficult to alter in principle. Circumstanced as we were, no general land system favorable to federal development could have grown from it, and what little temporary good could have been derived would have been heavily overshadowed by the harm to our developing democracy.

CHAPTER XIII

MEN AND MEASURES

THESE were years of ripening friendships for Grow, despite the bitter antagonisms engendered by measures. He numbered among his good friends sundry Southern leaders as well as some of the most bitter of abolitionists — Benjamin, Houston, Crittenden, Stephen Mallory, Hamilton Fish, James Harlan, and Charles Sumner.

“Judah P. Benjamin was one of the ablest lawyers I have ever met,” runs an autobiographical note. “His powers of persuasion were very great. He and Jefferson Davis and Robert Toombs, the ‘Big Three’ of the Southern Democracy, led the entire Senatorial force hither and thither just as they desired.” Grow considered Benjamin the brainiest man from the South while he sat in the Senate, Toombs the most irascible and vindictive, and Davis sly as a fox and smooth as silk, brilliant and in some ways a very strong man despite a supercilious manner which drove men from

him so that he lived without many warm and genial friends.

In the House, the coming back of Thaddeus Stevens, the great commoner from his own State, meant a great deal to Mr. Grow, whose especial group immediately surrounded him. In spite of the fact that he entered Congress at a time when strong men were plentiful, Stevens won fame and became a leader quickly, and later, through innate ability and remarkable personality, rose to mastership. His keen wit served him equally well in argument or emergency, and his remorselessness as an antagonist caused his sarcasm to be ever dreaded by his opponents. Grow long afterwards used to tell of the famous occasion when Kellian V. Whaley interrupted Stevens in the midst of an important argument and Stevens turned fiercely on him, saying, "I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia for a few feeble remarks." The general uproar which followed this sally drowned Mr. Whaley.

Stevens was feared by many, hated by some, loved by a few; but a little band, Elihu Washburne, Owen Lovejoy, John A. Logan, Henry Winter Davis, Anson Burlingame, Francis E. Spinner, Roscoe Conkling, Reuben E. Fenton,

John Sherman, Justin S. Morrill, John Covode, and Horace Maynard were as devoted to him as any knights ever were to their king. Vermonter by birth, he possessed aggressive power and sterling qualities of frankness and honesty. A graduate of Dartmouth, he practiced law and served in the Pennsylvania Legislature before coming to Congress. Originally a Whig, he joined the Republican Party early and became a violent radical, moved to extremes because he abhorred weak-kneed conservatism.

Grow himself, less radical, was still likely to engage in controversies. Upon one occasion in 1859 when the Senate added to the post-office appropriation bill a new provision regulating the rate of postage, voicing the feeling of many members who considered this an infringement of the right of the House to originate all revenue measures, Grow took a strong stand. The House sustained him and the bill failed. At the following session L. O. Branch, of North Carolina, whose antagonism had long been unconcealed, charged Grow with killing the post-office bill in order to compel an extra session of the Thirty-seventh Congress, which would give the Republicans control of the House.

Grow took the floor on the 29th of December in answer to the charge. He sharply challenged: "Had the gentleman from North Carolina been as familiar with constitutional law and parliamentary procedure as his long experience in legislation would have led us to suppose, he could have found sufficient and abundant reasons to justify my conduct and that of a majority of the House without violating all parliamentary and gentlemanly courtesies that are recognized in all deliberative bodies by impugning the motives of his peers, and charging sordid and selfish considerations as the moving cause of our actions."

Branch sprang to his feet and cried, "Does the gentleman's language impute to me any conduct that is not gentlemanly?"

Grow arose amid profound silence. The crowd in the packed galleries leaned forward to catch his words. He remained thoughtful for a moment and then, in a firm voice, said: "What I said is plain English and there it stands. Impugnment of motives in a legislative body is everywhere regarded not only as unparliamentary, but as ungentlemanly."

"I shall take your words as an affirmative answer," cried Branch.

"The gentleman from North Carolina may take what he pleases, but I shall take nothing back!" retorted Grow, resuming his seat.

Branch paled with anger at this reply. In a moment he motioned his colleague, Warren Winslow, to his side and requested him to take a challenge to Grow. When the challenge was presented, Grow promptly replied, "Regarding dueling as at variance with the precepts of the Christian religion and the sentiments of a Christian people, and it being prohibited and declared a crime by laws enacted by the body of which we are members, I cannot recognize it, even in cases of unwarranted provocation, as a justifiable mode of settling difficulties among men. But my personal rights and the freedom of debate guaranteed by the Constitution I shall defend whenever they are assailed."

With this flat refusal, Branch had a right under the code to attack Grow at any time or place, and the latter's friends felt certain that an encounter would ensue, as the Southerner was fearless, vindictive, and a devotee of dueling.

At this time Grow lived on Seventh Street and took his meals at the National Hotel, then

called Brown's Tavern. His intimate friends, fearing he might be attacked on his way to breakfast the next morning, assembled at his rooms to escort him to the hotel. Among them were Ben Wade, Lyman Trumbull, Reuben E. Fenton, and John F. Potter. Grow entered his parlor half-clad, surprised to see so many callers at such an early hour, and asked, "Gentlemen, what does this mean?"

Senator Wade replied, "We have come to escort you to breakfast and to protect you from North Carolina lead."

Grow laughingly retorted: "Why, gentlemen, I do not need an army to take me to coffee and bread. Give me John Potter. He has killed his grizzly and is a battalion in himself. We can take care of the enemy whenever and wherever he may attack."

Potter agreed to act as bodyguard and the rest left. Then arm in arm Potter and Grow, both armed with revolvers and Potter with his traditional bowie, set forth down Seventh Street. On the way to the Tavern Grow inquired, "Potter, what does your wife say of your volunteering to protect your friends from assault?"

"Oh," replied Potter, "she told me the other

day that if some one is to be killed in this cause it might as well be me as any one!"

They entered the tavern and from there went to the House, but neither Branch nor his second was in evidence, and in a short time the atmosphere of immediate uncertainty and danger cleared, and Branch was again on speaking terms with Grow.

One of Grow's homely sayings shows his philosophy in all such dilemmas. "You've got to keep your spine right!" he would comment, when stanch, resolute adherence to a position was called for.

Of the other men of Grow's immediate group none played a more important part than Corwin, whose sterling qualities and fearlessness Grow greatly admired. He had come to Congress in 1859, having previously served in the House and Senate, where he had exercised a marked influence on legislation even as early as the Mexican War against which he made a celebrated speech.

Grow, whose own mind was of something of the same bent, considered Corwin's kind-heartedness and sympathy somewhat exceptional.

"I have seen him," he recounted, "step out

and roundly lecture a man who was beating his horses. He was against whipping-posts, and while he was in the Ohio Legislature he spoke in favor of repealing a measure in which the sheriff was authorized to punish certain prisoners for minor offenses by 'putting thirty-nine lashes on the back of the culprit.' An old Connecticut Yankee who had settled in the Western Reserve objected to the repeal on the ground that in Connecticut a similar law existed and when applied resulted usually in driving the offender from the community. Corwin retorted: 'I have often tried to find out why there had been such an influx of Connecticut Yankees into this State. The gentleman, formerly a resident of the Nutmeg State, has explained it to my complete satisfaction.'"

With the best of good humor between the two friends, that dark chapter of history which preceded Mr. Lincoln's accession to the Presidency, since effaced from popular memory by the mighty events which followed it, brought a strong need of mutual support. Corwin was the drafter of an amendment to the Constitution which passed Congress in the last days of Buchanan's term, providing that slavery should never be interfered with in any State

where it then existed. Grow naturally did not favor this final peace offering to the South, but in view of the terrible, dissentient state of public feeling considered it justified.

The Democratic split, which resulted in the Northern wing putting up Douglas and the Southern Breckinridge for President, had lost them the election. Lincoln, Republican candidate, had a large plurality of both the electoral and popular votes, but the two Democratic factions combined polled nearly four hundred thousand more votes than he, while over a half-million votes were cast for Bell, the candidate of the old Know-Nothings and the Whigs who had not yet allied themselves with either Republicans or Democrats — a state of affairs which prompted the charge that Lincoln was a “minority President,” and led secessionists to call him even a “usurper.” Called to the chief magistracy of the nation on the issue of “Free Homes for Free Men,” no sooner was his election assured than a convention was held in South Carolina to pass an ordinance of secession. Intense excitement prevailed throughout the country: every one felt the stress of coming storm.

President Buchanan’s hopelessly unsatis-

factory Message when Congress convened in December, the utterance of a halting, undecided man, was significant only in its final, despairing appeal for conciliation. Committees in both Houses were formed to frame compromise measures, with a Democratic membership of thirteen in the Senate (to represent the original thirteen States) and one of thirty-three in the House (to represent the number then in the Union), and of the latter Corwin was chairman. The Senate committee failed to agree; but Corwin reported a scheme providing, among other things, for the abolition of personal liberty laws of the Northern States; for the admission of New Mexico as a State; for the amendment of the fugitive slave laws so that the right of freedom of an alleged fugitive should be determined by a court of the State from which he was fleeing instead of by a tribunal of the State where he was caught; and for the amendment, which Corwin drafted, declaring that "no amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will authorize or give to Congress the power to abolish or interfere in any State with the domestic institutions thereof, including that of persons held to labor or service by the laws of said State." And this

was to be the Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution!

The bill was passed by the House, where there was a Republican majority, by a vote of 133 to 65 on the last day of February in 1861. Grow, indignant at the attempt to take Washington and declare Jefferson Davis President for the time being; also at other exposed intrigues and the conspiracy against Lincoln which had made the President's journey to the Capitol perilous, still supported the bill. At heart he would have preferred that the North should not bend its back in obedience to belated pacific motives, but it seemed to most Republicans that the war must be stopped at price of any reasonable compromise; and Corwin's influence on Grow was strong.

Fort Moultrie had already been evacuated; insurrection had already begun. He supposed, however, in spite of this, that the Southern leaders might accept the advantage so opportunely given them; in his eyes if the South did not, it would be making a grave tactical blunder. By acquiescing promptly in this settlement they would secure an advantage of conclusive value and confirm, past all possible chance of future disturbance, the existence of

slavery in all Southern States. They might have perpetuated the institution without firing a gun if they had improved the opportunity thus presented.

But the poison of secession had laid hold of them. The compromise came too late. The Buchanan Administration, apparently dreaming on in treasonable repose, had mysteriously moved men and munitions. The army had been scattered as far as possible so that they were unavailable in an emergency. Ships had been ordered to distant points where they could not be of immediate use. The Treasury had been depleted; arms stored for national defense had been secretly disposed of. Yet, believing Buchanan paralyzed by vacillation and indifference, the North was not yet aroused to the true condition of things.

The Senate, during the night preceding March 4, adopted the Corwin measure, and the President signed it only an hour before the inauguration of his successor. Grow was deeply concerned, but fortunately the proposed surrender of all the principles for which the North was soon to fight was not consummated. Only two States ever took action on the matter, for there the undertaking was

stopped by the war. Instead, troops were hurried into the field and the clash of arms silenced politicians who were willing that "slavery should become immortal." For the first time "the oppressors and not the oppressed rebelled."

Lincoln, assuming control of national affairs, warning seceding States in his famous inaugural address against further violence, was answered by Sumter, where the flag, fired upon, went down in ruined battlements. He called for seventy-five thousand volunteers and three hundred thousand responded. The voluntary military organization known as the "Clay Brigade" was armed to protect the capital. Grow, with many other Northern and Western members of Congress, joined it and served until the Massachusetts and New York volunteers, under General Benjamin F. Butler, arrived by way of Annapolis and took charge of Washington.

Then events absorbed Grow: the Sixth Massachusetts in trying to pass through Baltimore was mobbed; Ellsworth, the brilliant commander of the Zouaves, was assassinated while trying to haul down the rebel flag in Alexandria; the battle of Big Bethel was fought

and lost; and at last the country awoke to the realization that "the irrepressible conflict" had arrived, and grim determination seized the North that come what might the Union must be preserved. Troops began to move faster.

A regiment from Pennsylvania came to Washington. Grow took a company from his own district up to see the President. Lincoln came out, busy as he was. He stopped, looked about, put his hand behind him and said, "When I get this handkerchief out of this coat-tail pocket, I intend to shake hands with you boys!" After something of a tussle he found the handkerchief and genially took them in turn.

There never was a time in our history when policies and men meant so much, and Grow put every bit of his dynamic force into effort to help where he might. Information coming his way which he felt might aid the Administration, he felt it was a duty to pass on to the proper authorities. He knew Simon Cameron, from his own State; had been thrown somewhat closely with him. Cameron's term in the Senate would expire several years later, but Lincoln had taken him from the Senate and



MR. GROW READING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY ON HIS VERANDA AT GLENWOOD

made him his first Secretary of War. From the first Cameron seemed to have misfortune: he could not bring about results. The lagging condition of affairs seemed to augur disaster to the Government. Grow felt constrained to write him frankly, and sent the following letter, which was fraught with many results for its writer: —

GLENWOOD, PA., *May 5, 1861.*

HON. SIMON CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

MY DEAR SIR: —

Reached home last night by way of New York. You have no conception of feeling, universal in the Northern mind, for the prosecution of war until the flag floats from every spot on which it had a right to float a year ago. If the Administration fails to prosecute the war to that end, it will sink in the popular heart below that of the Buchanan Administration. There is but one feeling with all classes, parties, and sects — that is, that the rebels must lay down their arms everywhere and the Union of the States be restored before this conflict closes. There is great dissatisfaction in New York at the ordering of General Wool back to Troy, instead of acknowledging his services at the very critical point of time when all communications with Washington were cut off. For four or five days they heard nothing from Washington and no one received any orders. It would be well if you could devise some way to have all men that offer

their services received, but detained, however, in the States until they are called for. The men who have left their business cannot wait long without pay from some source. In my judgment the enthusiasm of the hour ought not to be repressed by flat refusals on the part of the Government. Let the men be held in the States. The people of New York and other cities are very impatient for Baltimore to be opened, and on the rumor that the Government would not invade Virginia they were perfectly indignant, and I wish to say to you that *if the Government adopts that policy a universal execration will go up from the North and you will be as powerless in thirty days as you are now powerful.*

I saw many of the solid men of New York, and they will embark their all in this contest provided the Administration will prosecute it to the bitter end if need be, to quell the insurrection so that no madcap will ever try the experiment again.

I beg your pardon for trespassing so long upon your attention. My object is briefly to assure you that any measures if efficient, no matter what the cost is of prosecuting the war, would be more satisfactory if they had the foregoing results.

Most truly yours,

GALUSHA A. GROW.

Perhaps Grow trusted to a more complete understanding of his motives and a more definite friendliness than existed. Prompted purely by patriotism, he wrote as he always spoke, directly to the person concerned, and without

effort at diplomacy. The Republic was passing through a terrible ordeal. Grow was soon to know that he had not gauged his man; Cameron did not take kindly to his advice. Grow was to find out that Cameron had a long memory and forgave slowly if at all.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SPEAKERSHIP

LINCOLN's sublime determination to save the Union was immediately felt. He called together the Thirty-seventh Congress in extraordinary session on July 4, the eighty-fifth anniversary of the nation's birth. To be a council of gloom and glory, it had a momentous opening: excited multitudes packed the galleries of both the House and the Senate, and throngs stormed the doors in vain for admission. On the floor of the House the men with whom Grow mingled seemed silent and awed. If the depression which prevailed there could have been distributed, there would have been no cheerful face at the seat of government.

Many Southern Representatives, grown white in the service of their country, had resigned and gone sadly from Washington, leaving numerous vacant seats. The assemblage of men was still-notable, although there were only 178 members of the Thirty-seventh Congress as against 237 previously. Among those who remained were three subsequent Vice-

Presidents, four subsequent Governors, twelve subsequent Senators; altogether a Congress of big men met to consider questions of grave moment. There was the silent and grave John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, whose name connected the past political struggle of Congress with the great civil conflict which had just begun; and courtly Morrill, of Vermont, who afterwards became the "Father of the Senate." Thaddeus Stevens, who did more than any other one man to place the common-school system of the State and Nation on an enduring foundation; the "Tall Sycamore of the Wabash," Daniel W. Voorhees; Schuyler Colfax, later Speaker, and then Vice-President; William A. Wheeler, also afterwards Vice-President; William Windom, subsequently Secretary of the Treasury; John A. Logan, whose memory is dear to every Union soldier; William D. Kelley, the tariff leader; Roscoe Conkling, "haughty and proud, with ambrosial locks," and a conspicuous personality on the floor — all these played a strong part in the Congress. Francis P. Blair, the "bold trapper of the Rockies"; George H. Pendleton, creator of the Civil Service; Samuel S. Cox, founder of the Life-Saving System; and

William S. Holman, afterwards called the "Burglar-Proof Safe of the National Treasury," were also useful and active members.

There was but little formality in organizing the House. John Hickman, of Pennsylvania, named Francis P. Blair for Speaker. Thaddeus Stevens placed Grow's name on the list. Upon the ballot showing only forty votes for Blair he withdrew, which gave Grow a majority without further ceremony. Without the formality of a caucus, at the age of thirty-seven, to be chosen Speaker of the House was a great tribute, especially as then — and until 1886 — the place was only two removes from the Presidency. In addition, this was a War Congress. When the vote was announced proclaiming his election, the Confederate flag was flying from the hills of Virginia in full sight of the Capitol. The actualities of conflict had overtaken the "doughfaces and copperheads" of the North who would have been content to cry, "Let the erring sisters go in peace!" and this Congress would have to deal with momentous issues.

No wonder Grow's speech of acceptance, well received, was serious, and soberly spoken! It would tax any courage to face so broad a responsibility. He confessed that he was "over-

whelmed and depressed." No note escaped him, however, save one of patriotism, fortitude, and faith, but he finished his short address with these words, indicative of his humility: —

... Invoking for our guidance wisdom from that Divine Power which led our fathers through the red sea of Revolution, I enter upon the discharge of the duties to which you have assigned me, relying upon your forbearance and coöperation, and trusting that your labors will contribute not a little to the greatness and glory of the Republic.

Then Congress settled to its immensely trying work. That Congress raised the first troops, created legal-tender notes as a war measure, and issued the first bonds. In spite of the absence of Southern members, the state of general anxiety made it a session in which there was much bitterness of debate and now and then violent expressions of temper. During the next five weeks vast plans for the army and navy had to be adopted, ways and means provided for their support, appropriations reaching into hundreds of millions of dollars passed for war purposes, the policy of the Government toward the seceding States defined, intricate foreign questions adjusted so far as Congress had power, provision made for the collection of duties, plans for making appropri-

ations for the legislative, executive, and judicial departments devised, laws looking to the confiscation of property used for insurrectionary purposes and to increase our consular representation put through. The total appropriations of the session amounted to nearly \$350,000,000, against \$66,000,000 the previous session.

Seventeen days after Grow assumed the Speakership, eighteen thousand Union soldiers under the command of General McDowell met the rebel army at Bull Run. Grow writes: —

When the defeat at Bull Run occurred and the Union army was thrown into confusion and rout, Lincoln said to me one evening: "My boys are green at the fighting business, but wait till they get licked enough to raise their dander! Then the cry will be, 'On to Richmond' and no 'Stone-walls will stop them!'"

The people of the North generally, afforded a surprising spectacle by that mysterious panic which seized the Union forces at Bull Run and hurled them back upon Washington in disorder, awoke to a realization that the rabid abolitionists had been false prophets and dangerous advisers. Boasts that they could march a drove of Durham cows into Virginia and capture the State without the loss of a calf,

because Southerners would not be able to fight without negroes to carry their guns, were hastily forgotten, and the "Bluecoats" settled to their task with the knowledge that the South was alive with men of invincible courage.

During the excitement about Bull Run and shortly after the adjournment of the extra session, Grow wrote to that controversial figure of power, General Butler, requesting that he be appointed upon his staff so that he might have actual service in the field before the convening of the regular session. The following was his reply: —

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MY DEAR SIR: —

When I got your note I was about to start upon an expedition of which you may have heard since.

Having been superseded, being apparently in a situation which would render the offer of a place upon my staff as an intended insult, I determined not to answer it until times changed; and you may now, without disgrace, take service with me. I leave for Massachusetts to-day, and shall be again in the field with a command at once independent and active. You will need nothing but a blue flannel suit made of army pattern for Major, a sword, shoulder straps, spurs, a belt, revolver, blankets, and overcoat.

We will have two months before the fifteenth of November of service or leave Congress without a

Speaker. You are at the Springs for your health. Why not come to Massachusetts and stop with me? You can get your equipment there and we will confer upon necessary matters of our campaign.

Do come. You have many friends in the Commonwealth who will be glad to see you, and none more than

Yours truly,

BENJAMIN F. BUTLER.

HONORABLE GALUSHA GROW,
SHARON SPRINGS.

Owing to the pressing duties of the Speakership, Grow was advised by the President and many members not to accept service with General Butler. He was busy enough in Washington during the interim between the extra and second sessions.

All his free time he spent in the Virginia military camps or hospitals. His sister-in-law, who with Frederick Grow had come with him to live in Washington, accompanied him frequently to lend assistance to the suffering. Besides much general work they looked after the boys from their own district who were under the colors. They searched the trains of sick and wounded as they came in and supervised the care of many they knew in hospitals. Some Grow fed from his own table; certain ones he tended like brothers. He showed the

utmost thoughtfulness, as for instance in one "head case," who had always to lie motionless in one position. In order that this protégé might better see and enjoy the flowers they took in profusion to the hospitals, the dignified Speaker painstakingly pinned bouquets to the counterpane near the foot of the bed!

The Thirty-seventh Congress was epoch-making for the nation. Not alone the extensive war measures had to be put through, but most important economic advances were made. "It seems," says A. G. Riddle, "to have been possibly the first whose vision and grasp embraced the continent." The creation of the Department of Agriculture, discussed for two decades, but needing the direct coöperation of forceful men like Grow and Lovejoy, was at last effected. It had become impossible, as both knew from personal experience, longer to handle the immense farming interests of the country through the Interior Department and congressional committees. This change meant that our great fundamental industry, farming, would receive immense aid.

Looking always, with perceptions sharpened by deep realization of the difficulties of amalgamating the interests of the States, to find the

ways to link the parts of the continent more firmly,¹ this Congress enacted the Pacific Railroad and Telegraph Law, fought over since 1850. There was no doubt that it was a life need of the nation. Grow had consistently opposed the grants of land, and when the act was passed in 1862 it was not in a form sufficiently liberal to attract capital,² naturally shy at that period, — a fact which seems strange to-day when one considers that the company was granted ten alternate sections per mile and bonds to the extent of \$50,000,000! But Grow was eager enough to see the rails ribboning the way to the Pacific, knowing that a wonderful diffusion of population must follow into the wilderness. He was roused to submission as to land by enthusiasm over uniting the Atlantic and the Pacific by the “mighty lasso” of the railroad and telegraph.

The Homestead Act was, however, the greatest test of the capacity of this Congress for broad action, for it dealt with the high destiny of the nation. Crown of a group of land bills, among them that which granted lands to state colleges of agriculture and mechanics and another reducing the expense of survey of

¹ Godkin.

² Haney, *Railroad Grants*.

the domain, the Homestead Bill was by all odds the most significant measure which was brought forward.

Grow faced his opportunity exultantly. In the last session of the previous Congress he had re-introduced his own bill and secured its passage in the House, but when it went to the Senate Andrew Johnson piloted it into but not out of his committee. War issues crowding to climax absorbed every one's attention. But now the South was no longer in the way. The President was favorable to the passage of a proper bill.

But the fifth and last act of the Homestead drama was not to be simply played out. The North, it was true, believed that the theory would prove expedient in practice. They knew how essential it was to stop that speculation and sale of large tracts to non-residents which had been such a dire curse to the West — which had retarded the growth of communities, delayed internal improvements, forbade a general system of public schools, and hampered social and moral improvement. *But* the very nation was insecure. Even if the principle was sound, was it expedient? The question was giving away lands which were a possible source

of revenue at a time when the Treasury was drained by war. The credit of the nation was based on public lands and it might therefore be damaged abroad. Congress was by no means in a happy humor to discuss constructive plans. It took considerable courage, while it was dubious whether the North would hold the nation together, to ask its Congress to take this step. It was a test of their faith in themselves.

Grow had no hesitation in demanding action on what he felt to be a measure observing common interests, conserving social and political equality, and promoting common hopes. Since it was not in order for the Speaker personally to propose bills, Lovejoy and Potter were both willing agents. Potter, however, had set his mind most firmly on combining a bounty of both cash and land for soldiers with the simple homestead proposal, a combination the Speaker did not at all relish. Lovejoy, therefore, perhaps at Grow's instigation, introduced the straight bill and asked immediate action almost upon the very moment of the House convening.

But Lovejoy made the mistake of doing it improperly. Potter was on guard to get what

he wanted, and objected that there had been no sufficient notice of Lovejoy's bill, and that he had not been instructed by a majority of the committee, facts which Lovejoy had to admit. The Speaker had, therefore, to sustain Potter's proposal, comforting himself that, with the exception of the bounty feature, and such slight differences as the provision that eighty acres subject to preëmption might be taken if preferred to one hundred and sixty acres, priced heretofore at a dollar and a quarter an acre, Potter's bill was identical.

Grow left the Chair in charge of Elihu Washburne to take the floor and assert once more that which was close to his heart.

"I want the Government to protect the rights of men, the hearthstones and firesides of those who have gone forth to people the wilderness and build up the great empires which to-day span the continent and have made this country the wonder and admiration of the world," he had said not long before, and this day his message was the same. He called attention to the fact that the bill had already passed the House five times in the last ten years. He urged that it should be sufficiently matured for immediate action. No measure had ever been

more emphatically approved by the people, especially that portion of it which was still loyal to the Constitution. The contention that the public land should not be sold when the Treasury was in bad condition, he dealt with by quoting from the Commissioner of the General Land Office, who reported that for some time the domain had ceased to be a source of income. Almost all the land for years previous had been paid for in scrip. He stated strongly that the credit of a nation was not standardized by the amount of unproductive property it might possess, but by the ability of its people to pay taxes.

His one protest on the form of the bill was against the issue of bounty land warrants. This, he said, was surplusage, as every soldier who wanted actually to occupy land had the same chance at one hundred and sixty acres as had every one else. It was sufficient, to his mind, to provide money bounty; and to give the land to non-settlers was to repeat the old mistake of conferring unsubstantial benefit at the cost of lasting injury to the people. Now, more than ever, he urged, it was the true policy of the Government to grant the domain to genuine settlers.

If it seemed a test of faith to ask this Congress to pass a measure of such moment at the very time the Union itself was insecure, it is certain that in reality the war was the last and best reason for opening the commonage. Holman, of Indiana, concurring in general with the "condensed and forcible argument of Mr. Grow," declared that "the policy of applying the public lands in such a manner as to increase the number of secure and independent homesteads was of first importance, *vital*, indeed, to the ultimate stability of the Republic." Nevertheless he begged, with unwise sentimentality, that the bill should be recommitted to the Committee on Public Lands with instructions to amend it to extend the bounty land laws of 1855 to the soldiers of the existing war. He contended that this would not interfere with the homestead feature.

To save the domain from just such mistaken generosity constituted a new phase of the problem, new because the feeling was sincere and not used as a ruse to help speculators. Holman's plan would have absorbed practically the entire domain. It failed because the advocates of the homestead, even those like Potter, who wanted a bounty, felt that this

was going too far. Potter, urging his own land-bounty idea, agreed entirely that settlement must be the main end. "Our paralyzed interests require," he said, "that we do all in our power to invite immigration and capital to our unoccupied lands. No wiser policy can be adopted in the present condition of the country." The measure passed the House at last, February 28, upon a vote of 107 to 16, carrying a bounty of thirty dollars cash for each three months' soldier, one hundred dollars for those enlisted for the whole war, and each soldier was awarded a quarter-section in addition.

In the Senate, reported with amendments, it met comparatively light opposition. The biggest part of the change effected was to make the act rebel-tight, — sadly inevitable while the war occupied the mental foreground, — so that no man having borne arms against the Government should be permitted to take land under it. Wade, acting as he always had upon this proposal in sympathy with Grow, succeeded in doing that which the Speaker felt to be essential, and Grow until his death spoke with gratitude of Wade's part in the matter. He caused the military bounty clauses, which

were not economic but sentimental, to be struck out and the title amended to the simple Homestead. Some minor amendments were added, the act passed, and the concurrence of the House asked upon the changes.

The House disagreed at first, being mindful of its precious dignity, and asked a conference. Potter hated to see the beloved project shorn of all that was his. The result, however, was that Grow pressed gallantly for a settlement; the House concurred. The act went to the President. Lincoln signed it the 20th of May, 1862.

So the drama happily ended, and the bad Graduation Act of 1854 was supplanted. To Grow, the glory of his Speakership was to sign the Homestead Act for which he had labored for ten years, for which he had fought as men fight only for the things essentially close to their hearts. That original impulse of his boyhood had carried him through many disappointments to positive achievement. By this act he knew that the national commonage would go to the toiling millions, where by all the principles of justice and by the laws of nature it rightfully belonged. He had put every fiber of his heart into this work inspired by

the ideal of a greater America, of a well-based democracy, and his success was largely due to his singleness of aim.

The law went into effect at the same time as the Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863. If the Thirty-seventh Congress had performed no other service than the passage of the Homestead Law it would have done enough. By assuring a system of small farms, even before the issue of slavery was determined on the battle-fields, — was determined by blood, — freedom was secured to the entire domain by law. Nearly half the area of the country, 1,400,000,000 acres, came under the mantle of this statute's protection. It laid forever the ghost of States' individual rights to the domain, reinforcing federal authority in a way which could not be gainsaid. To those pioneers, from the first heroic wave to the later sturdy tide which had crept across the country and dotted settlements like specks on the edge of the map, the act assured permanent foothold. It offered the great heart of America to the newcomer if he cared to become one of us. It inaugurated the third great period of land legislation.

In this, as in every other difficult problem of

legislation, Grow found Lincoln a wise and careful adviser. They were frequently in consultation, mainly concerning war matters. Seen from a congressional angle, the war was a question chiefly of raising hundreds of millions of revenue, of passing measures of expediency, and of putting through such acts for the good of the nation as would tend to stabilize conditions, including measures to secure the freedom of all persons within the Territories; to prevent the army from catching slaves; to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; to punish frauds by officers making contracts for the Government; to punish treason; to confiscate property; and to grant amnesty. Treatment of open wounds, these measures, although not long in passing, caused the war to be fought over again upon the floor, and Lincoln's counsel was invaluable.

He never rubbed Congress the wrong way. He was masterful in diplomacy as in politics, and with the aid of this quality he brought members to see his way who the day before were looking in the opposite direction [wrote Grow]; a power he possessed beyond any man who has appeared in our public life and which was absolutely essential to his trying position. I often wondered what would have happened if Seward had beaten him in the

convention. Seward was one of the wisest men in his generation, but Seward never understood the art of wise selection and handling of men. It is a question if he could have kept such a cabinet as Lincoln selected in harness two weeks without broken traces, cracked whiffletrees, and a general smash-up. But those on the ground knew how Lincoln managed them and made them do great work, although Chase and Cameron and later Stanton tried his masterful patience almost to the parting of the ways, and did it many times in the very days when he most needed their loyal sympathy and help. To work with them and through them and get the best out of them was much — far more than it was in Seward to have done.

Grow at the time approved strongly of Seward's management of the Trent affair, although it put the House, which had promptly voted thanks to Captain Wilkes, in a somewhat unenviable position. He always felt that it was to Seward's lasting credit to disown an act contrary to law, especially as he thereby avoided war with Great Britain. He was in this instance as outspoken in his approval as with Cameron he was in making no bones of his disapproval.

Cameron in the mean time had resigned.

No one who knew Simon Cameron well [wrote Grow] could doubt his patriotism and loyalty to

the Administration, but it was evident from the first that he was not the right man for the great task of carrying on the fiercest civil conflict of all time. No one knew this better than he and he finally laid down the burden of his difficult position.

If Cameron knew, he was still very proud, for he cherished deep hurt against those who had felt it kindest to tell him the truth. He went home with animus against all who opposed him, a condition of the highest importance to the Speaker, since Cameron was head man in Pennsylvania politics for many years after.

That very year (1861), really but a short time after his letter, Grow found himself confronted by a new condition in his district. A reapportionment under the Census of 1860 obtained, and a new district had been formed by the powers which controlled the State, taking away the Republican counties of Bradford and Tioga and linking Luzerne to Susquehanna. The object of the men in power was obvious; it meant that they could control the election by transforming the district into a Democratic stronghold; and this they did, to the effect that Grow was not elected again. It was an arbitrary and unjust political act, plainly revengeful.

Although he was facing the end of his period in Washington and was in wretched health, his last year was by no means dull. His house was a place where many congenial people met and over which Mrs. Frederick Grow presided acceptably. One of his pleasures to the end of his life was his friendship with John Hay, begun then.

While visiting Lincoln one evening [Grow narrates in a note], I met his young private secretary, John Hay, who afterwards brought me personal communications from the White House. In time we became good friends, and in those early days I used to say to my political colleagues, "Young Hay, if he lives, will become a very useful public servant, for he has the highest and best views of public life I ever heard expressed by one so young, and he also has a personality which will be of the greatest service to him in his career."

John Hay often spent an evening at Grow's house, and no one was more welcome or more entertaining.

I remember during my Speakership giving a reception at which the Diplomatic Corps were largely represented and young Hay took charge of the details and helped to make the entertainment a brilliant success. Lincoln was very much attached to him, and often spoke to me in high terms of his ability and trustworthiness. I know of no

person in whom the great President reposed more confidence and to whom he confided secrets of State as well as his own personal affairs with such great freedom.

During this time, with over half a million men under arms on land and sea, and the Southern forces giving the army plenty to think about, Lincoln's faith was uplifting. Grow records: —

I spent many hours with the President during the darkest days of the war. He remained always the same fearless, brave man whose personality and calm, patient spirit were incomparable. I was with him often when he was receiving news of some great battle, and whether our side won or lost his great heart seemed to shudder at the slaughter of soldiers.

Big events pressed hard upon one another's heels in 1862 and 1863.

As I recall those hours, spent with our greatest President, "who stood alone, no ancestors, no fellows, no successors" [said Grow], I know why "a remembering world will never forget that on his sad and tragic face was deeply graven the divine patience of destiny. He spoke at times as no man spoke except the lowly Nazarene, and he clothed his words with justice and mercy."

Always simple, even in his joking moods never undignified, he made me feel completely at home in his presence. With such a beginning as he had

to reach the heights that he did was miraculous. Born in a pitiful hovel, surrounded by squalor and want, he became the mightiest personality of his day — homely in body and divine in spirit.

Interested always in the international aspects of the war, when the Russian fleet mysteriously visited American shores under sealed orders in 1863 Grow insisted that the battle-ships had not come here, as the press said and the people believed, simply from friendship to the United States. He said: —

The fleet has come because Russia's great commercial interests are at stake. She has come because she is unwilling to have France and England take advantage of our involved position and thus in the end obtain immense commercial vantage-ground. She is strictly looking after the interests of Russia.

In this position he found few sympathizers at the time, but it is interesting to note that in 1894 Wharton Barker, who was Grow's friend, gave an explanation of the incident which bore out his early sagacious judgment. The Czar, with whose confidence Mr. Barker had been honored, had observed to him: —

In the autumn of 1862 the Governments of France and Great Britain proposed to Russia, in a formal but not an official way, the joint recognition

by European powers of the independence of the Confederate States of America. My immediate answer was, "I will accept the recognition of the independence of the Confederate States as a *casus belli* for Russia. And, in order that the Governments of Great Britain and France may understand that this is no idle threat, I will send a Pacific fleet to San Francisco and an Atlantic fleet to New York." They were sent out and sealed orders given to both admirals.

All of this I did for the love of my own dear Russia rather than for the love of the American Republic. I acted thus because I understood that Russia would have a more serious task to perform if the American Republic, with advanced industrial development, were broken up and Great Britain should be left in control of most branches of modern industrial development.

Throughout these turbulent times there is every evidence that Grow filled his difficult place as Speaker with tact and a remarkable sense of fairness. Courage, as well as patience of the highest class, was required. He was cool and he was absolutely at home in construing the rules. The executive of the House of Representatives who administers that great office under normal conditions must be wise and efficient; but while the most fearful civil war known to history was raging and the life of the nation hung in the balance, to have pre-

sided so satisfactorily that no appeal was ever made from his decisions from the first to the final day of three busy sessions was a feat that proved Grow's statesmanlike metal. By our system immense power rested then with the Speaker. Unless otherwise determined by the House, the Speaker, appointing all the committees, — which have control of the life or early death of each measure, — had not a little to say about the chances of any bill. The place demanded mental and physical force such as is found only in rare men.

It would be difficult to point to any other instance where a youth untrained in the art of government passed with such phenomenal strides from chore boy on a farm in the backwoods to the desk and gavel of one of the most powerful of legislative bodies. No Speaker we have had save Clay, of the number now nearing forty, was younger in point of years, and it has fallen to the lot of few to merit a unanimous vote of thanks upon retirement, a mark of approbation for his unfailing courtesy and skill which was most heartily given to Galusha A. Grow.

CHAPTER XV

RIPE YEARS AND A RETURN TO ACTION

THROUGH the twelve absorbing years of his first period in Congress Grow had proved himself a leader, but although he had won a great name he faced a difficult political predicament because he was not content, as were so many able and public-spirited men of that day, to take orders from unofficial managers. He was known not to be malleable in the organization. He had always been successful in spite of this; now he was to meet a long period of frustration. When Congress adjourned in March, 1863, he returned to Glenwood in exceedingly bad health and sent a substitute to the field until he should be physically acceptable or recalled to legislative duties.

He found his mother in extremely delicate health and arranging her affairs, a business in which she showed still that dominant spirit and good judgment which were her first characteristics. The joint property was to be divided and there was some disagreement as to portions. Samuel had already had and lost

what Frederick considered a full share, but Mrs. Grow was determined to give him something in addition. It was with Samuel and his "smart" (capable) wife that she had always chosen to live on the old farmstead.

Galusha felt that the matter lay entirely with his mother and stood by her, but Frederick insisted that if Mrs. Grow still wanted to do something for "Sammy," it would be well to put the money in trust or keep it invested so that he could not lose it.

Samuel and his wife finally went to the room where Mrs. Grow was confined to tell her proudly that either they wanted the money without obligation, to manage themselves, or they did not want it at all. The mother admired their spirit and disposed her estate without reference to her eldest son's wishes, with the result that he flung out of the house and was absent several days. Mrs. Grow was just able to be downstairs again, and was sitting on the little step between the two rooms which served as the chief stage of family action, when Frederick returned. He strode in, straight past the family, to his mother and took her in his arms and kissed her. It was reconciliation; both their eyes were full of tears. To "Boy

Galusha," as Mrs. Grow still called him, this ending of strife meant much. He was glad to have her to the last as she always had been, a masterful woman, captain of them all.

After she died he tried going out into his friendly mountains surveying again, but his health did not improve as it should. Able to supervise work, in 1864 and 1865 he was engaged part of the time in the lumber trade at Newton in Luzerne County. He was appointed delegate to the National Republican Conventions in 1864 and 1868, and was chairman of the State Convention; but reelection as a Representative did not come to him. Cameron, still dominant, was irrevocably against him.

He devoted himself during the years 1866 and 1867 to the development of oil properties in Venango County, and his health not greatly improving, he went West in 1871, making the journey, somewhat uncommon in those days, from California up through Washington to Victoria in British Columbia. He went to Texas in the autumn of that year to assume the presidency of the Houston and Great Northern Railway Company, a post which he held four years, during which time the railroad was extended several hundred miles.

During his life in Texas he eschewed politics except that, being an admirer of Horace Greeley and not approving of President Grant's Administration so far as it related to the South, he gave Greeley his moral but not his active support. He did not approve of the way Greeley had linked his fortunes with his old-time foe, the Democracy.

Grow's fight with the organization was resumed upon his return to Pennsylvania. Already they had defeated him twice for Congress, but in spite of the treatment he had received from the party he consistently served it, zealously working for Hartranft for Governor. In 1878 the delegates from a majority of the Republican counties of the State were sent to Harrisburg by the people with the understanding that they were to nominate Grow for Governor, but once more the organization set its influence against him. He refused the Lieutenant-Governorship which the organization offered him, but with characteristic good feeling, took the stump for Hoyt and delivered a speech at Oil City which was celebrated in the campaign as the most masterly analysis of "Greenbackism" ever uttered.

President Hayes tendered him the Russian

Mission, but he refused it, informing the Chief Magistrate that he had decided in young manhood never to accept any place not elective. In 1881 the members of the State Legislature from over two thirds of the Republican counties were sent to Harrisburg with instructions to elect Grow to the Senate. Pennsylvania politics in these years were growing worse instead of better, however, and there was a long, bitter struggle again ending in Grow's defeat. Several of the members were burned in effigy for their disloyalty to the expressed wishes of their constituents. This political misfortune, although Grow regarded it better to be honored by defeat than dishonored by compromise, demanded fortitude in the face of the ease which had marked his earlier campaigns and the honors which had been accorded him by the whole nation.

He knew that he was practically helpless against an unseen host. Nearly sixty years old, and believing that it was futile to reënter public life, he confined himself to business, but continued to take an active part in promoting the interests of the party he had helped to create. He was consulted about the appointments in his district, and was sent as delegate

to the National Convention in 1884; but his time went, in the main, into the development of a soft-coal mine at Brady's Bend on the Allegheny River. He found much pleasure in the spacious home which he had built in a most sightly spot after his return from Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Grow lived with him and his friends were most hospitably entertained there. He never dropped his Washington acquaintance, and in these years he used occasionally to go to Brook Farm with Garrison or Hale. His lines fell in pleasant places.

Not long before the election of 1884, when James G. Blaine was candidate for the Presidency, he told Grow and Reuben Fenton, who were with him, that his friends wanted to give him a dinner in New York. Both Fenton and Grow knew that this dinner would be attended largely by men who exercised great corporate power and possessed vast wealth, and that the opposition would seize upon the occasion to awaken labor interests against him. Both of them, being much interested in saving Blaine from possible blunders, warmly and sagaciously urged him to decline, as well as to keep away from New York City during the rest of the campaign. Said Grow:—

Blaine did not agree with our views, and accepted the invitation. The dinner project was dangerous enough, but a new and unexpected menace appeared which neither Fenton nor I had foreseen. While stopping at the Fifth Avenue Hotel a delegation of ministers called upon Blaine, and their spokesman, Dr. Burchard, said that the Democratic Party was the party of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion." Blaine winced at the alliteration, but for some strange reason he left the stupid observation unrebuked. It was claimed by George William Curtis and Carl Schurz, the leaders of the Independents, that Blaine would have been beaten if the incident had not occurred, but those in close touch with the true condition of the electorate a week prior to this were convinced that the three R's caused Blaine's defeat.

It was now more than twenty years since the Homestead Act had gone into effect. Gratifying direct testimony of those who had taken up land frequently reached Mr. Grow. About this time he received the following letter, which, fifteen years later, was to have an unexpected sequel: —

BEATRICE, GAGE COUNTY, NEB.,
December 29, 1886.

HONORABLE GALUSHA A. GROW.

DEAR SIR, — To-day I send you by express a cane cut from the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ section 26 north, Range 5 east, near Beatrice, Gage County, Nebraska.

Said land was taken by me at the U.S. Land Office, Brownsville, under the Homestead Act of May 20th, 1862, about 12.30 o'clock on the morning of January 1st, 1863, and I have resided on it ever since.

My application for said patent was No. 1, my proof of residence No. 1, and the patent is recorded on Page 1, Volume 1, of the records at Washington. Hence this cane sent you was grown upon the land first taken under the said Homestead Act.

Knowing well that the zealous and able efforts put forth by you to secure the passage of said act justly entitle you to be considered its father; and realizing that the said act is the greatest that has ever been passed by Congress, I feel that I, as one of its beneficiaries, am not overstepping the rules of propriety in presenting you with this simple token of my gratitude and appreciation. Begging you to accept this simple Homesteader's gift, I am, most respectfully,

Yours,

DANIEL FREEMAN.

Such letters showed that Mr. Grow, if out of public affairs, was by no means forgotten, and his return to the stage of national life was certainly long overdue.

He had entered the third period of his life when the nation again accorded him deserved and acceptable recognition. The first occasion was that of Pennsylvania's presentation in the House (January 21, 1892) of the portraits of

two of her sons, Grow and Randall, who had reached the Speakership. Grow was invited to be present on that day and the Speaker *pro tempore*, Mr. Milliken, invited him to occupy the Chair.

As the dignified ex-Speaker arose and passed down the center aisle, erect and lithe as an Indian, he looked altogether what he was, a fine old gentleman. He received an ovation which might well have roused pride in the heart of any man, not ending until he took his place at the Speaker's desk. It recurred when W. S. Holman, accepting the portraits in behalf of the House, paid him tribute of which this was a part: "Mr. Grow as a legislator is most famous as one of the first if not the first champion of the homestead policy of disposing of the public lands, the most beneficent measure ever enacted by Congress."

The following year William Lilly, Congressman-at-Large from Pennsylvania, died. Grow came out as a candidate. Through the accident of Quay being in Florida tarpon fishing, the organization did not promptly give orders to crush him and the announcement received such state-wide enthusiasm that the party fell into line. The majority of 181,000 which he

received at the polls in 1894 demonstrated how gladly the people of Pennsylvania welcomed him back to public service. The nation had too long been deprived of a wise counselor and statesman.

When he reëntered Congress after an absence of thirty-one years he was to nearly every member of that body only a faint memory. But he retained a vivid interest in affairs which kept him young, and a happy discovery freed him at last from the worst part of a persistent ill health. He at once became a noted and interesting figure in the House, where every possible consideration was shown him. He was allowed to choose the seat most agreeable to him — and strange to say he found sitting beside him the only colored member from the South, a man who had been a slave. Owing to his advanced age, Reed, then Speaker, appointed him chairman of the Committee on Education, where the work was not onerous, but of an important nature.

During the next three terms he was renominated without opposition, the majorities continually increasing, 246,462, 267,446, 272,409 — the largest majorities ever given any state candidates at any time. Thenceforward he

was affectionately called "Great-Majority Grow."

The House recognized him as one of the ablest exponents of the basic principles of the party, especially of sound money and protection, and careful attention was given to what he said because of his good judgment and foresight. He attended even protracted night sessions. R. R. Hitt, of Illinois, for many years chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, in speaking of Grow during his last term in Congress when he was nearing his eightieth year, said, "He is our oracle and we go to him freely for advice. In the caucus, on the floor, and in the committee room he is always in demand. There is more horse sense in him than in any man I ever knew."

In this later term of service his old interest in territorial expansion had much to feed upon. He spoke on the Hawaiian policy of the Government. When he rose in 1900 to repeat his maiden speech on "Man's Right to the Soil," made forty-eight years before, he was greatly applauded. It was proposed to put under the Homestead Act all Indian lands acquired by treaty since 1890. In that year Holman, of Indiana, had inaugurated a new policy by

which settlers paid a fixed price per acre for such land, in some cases running to three dollars and seventy-five cents. Grow believed that it was still better policy for the Government to give the land to the present-day homeseeker, who is also a pioneer — although some removes from the early type. He urged that we had still not outgrown our need to settle the wilderness with individual homes, and that it should not be a question of whether the Government made or lost money directly by the transaction. The principle was the same as it had been in the beginning; the ideal of land for every individual who would give his labor and love to it was still worthy, and all the more necessary since we had wastefully lavished land without requiring proper settlement.

The land cry rang out again. It was remarkable to hear the aged champion of "Free Homes for Free Men," after an interim of nearly fifty years since his first speech, again exhorting Congress to uphold the homestead policy.

When the time came for him to retire in 1903 the members of the Fifty-seventh Congress unanimously adopted resolutions expressing their appreciation of his value and their regret

that he should leave them. At home, too, it was felt that some signal attention should be paid to the end of his public service. All the people of the countryside determined that he should have a memorable welcome on his return home. On the day he came from Washington eight thousand people crowded the roads that led to Montrose, the county seat, and both the preparations and the celebration itself were such as we seldom see in this country, reminiscent of the honors that a German community pays to its dignitary — say a Gross-Herzog — upon home-coming.

When Grow arrived at the station the first person to grasp his hand was Freeman, from Nebraska, the first Homesteader! His presence furnished a novel incident which roused great enthusiasm. As they entered the first carriage they were given three cheers and a continuous ovation greeted them all along the gayly decorated route to the Fair grounds. From the steps of the court house, where he had been admitted to the bar fifty years before, Grow, with Freeman by his side, reviewed the parade. At the Fair grounds there were addresses, special songs adapted to the occasion, two sets of artistically engrossed resolutions

were presented, and letters and telegrams were read.

Freeman told how he came to secure the first homestead.

I was stationed at Brownsville, Nebraska, as a young soldier to do some secret service work. The town was the seat of a government land office and the place was filled with prospective settlers who were waiting for the 1st of February, when the Grow homestead law was to become operative. I had, in my several details, seen a good deal of Nebraska. I liked the soil of Gage County, so I staked my claim near Beatrice, and waited anxiously for the time when I could make my filing at the government office.

The fates seemed against me. I was ordered to St. Louis and had to leave early January 1st, the day the Homestead Law went into effect. On the night of December 31st, the prospective settlers had a dance. I sought out the assistant registrar of the land office, who was in the ballroom, and urged him to let me file my claim at midnight, so I could leave for St. Louis early next morning. He agreed to this and we went to the office where the preliminary papers were made out. Before one o'clock Homestead Entry No. 1 was signed and I went away to St. Louis a happy lad.

At the expiration of my service in 1865, I returned to Nebraska, built a log cabin and married the young woman who owned the adjoining claim. We lived happily on this property for fifty years. [And turning to Mr. Grow he went on:] And to

you, sir, we owe much of our happiness and prosperity.

The cheers were deafening. The whole occasion was marked by a charming good feeling, warm affection, pride, and patriotism. Among the letters was one from President Roosevelt in which he expressed regret that he could not be present. He spoke of Grow's introduction of the Homestead Bill which had served us so well, and congratulated his Pennsylvania neighbors that "in public and private life alike Speaker Grow has shown those qualities of which we are most proud in our citizens."

From the Commissioner-General of the Land Office came an interesting contribution giving the figures which showed how the statute had worked. During that fiscal year, ending June 30, 1901, 63,343 entries had been made, embracing an area of 8,234,590 acres, or a greater number and a larger area of land than for any previous year since the enactment of the law. The total for thirty-nine years was 636,998 entries, covering an area of 85,344,956.38 acres.

The letter which meant most of all to Mr. Grow was John Hay's, addressed to a member of the Home Welcome Committee: —

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, *April 14, 1903.*

DEAR SIR: —

We have received your esteemed letter of the 27th of March, in which you invite me to be present at the "Welcome Home" which Susquehanna is preparing for her honored and illustrious son the Hon. Galusha A. Grow.

I regret extremely that the pressure of many exacting engagements will not permit me to be present and bring the tribute of my profound respect and affection to the beloved and eminent statesman whose return to his home you are about to celebrate.

Mr. Grow has lived in a great time and has borne his part nobly in the momentous events which have fulfilled the long space of his political activity. But the one achievement which will make his name memorable among those of the benefactors of his kind is the Homestead Law. An act like this transcends all considerations of political and economic success, and appeals to the heart and the sentiment of all people. A man who has contributed, as Galusha Grow has, to the lasting welfare of millions is entitled to the gratitude not only of his country but of the world.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN HAY.

Mr. Grow's acknowledgment of these honors was deep-felt, and given with the simple dignity, the love for his neighbor, the friendliness and winning address which endeared him

to all — which, indeed, gave to his life the quality of a hearthstone tale.

The memory of that homage was a source of pleasure during the next four years, which Mr. Grow passed quietly at his home in Glenwood, in the valley of that pretty affluent of the masterful Susquehanna, the Tunkhannock.

Two years before his death, Andrew Carnegie, learning that Mr. Grow was in straitened circumstances, at once placed him on his private pension list with a generous annual allowance. When thanked by a friend for his thoughtful consideration of the venerable ex-Speaker, he said simply: —

Don't thank me. I should thank you for giving me an opportunity to show my appreciation of Mr. Grow's worth as a public servant. I take great pleasure in being of any use to him during his declining years. He has done a great work for mankind, a work which will bless the ages, and he deserves to spend his remaining days in peace and comfort. By his statesmanship and intelligent efforts he saved our vast territory beyond the Mississippi River for the landless of our people and thus millions of free homes were made possible to the tillers of the soil. This work alone entitles him to the gratitude and homage of all Americans and it is a distinct pleasure to feel that I have been able to befriend him in any way. It is

vouchsafed to only a few men to do great things to bless mankind and Mr. Grow was one of this favored group.

Surrounded by comfort made possible by Mr. Carnegie's kindness, these mellow patriarchal years were spent in the companionship of well-loved books and friends. He sat often in his study bedroom before the open fire fed by hickory logs. In the comfortable chair he had used for thirty years, with spectacles he had used for forty years, he diligently read the "New York Tribune" which he had taken from its first issue. His interest in current events was deep, and he loved the comrades, few but intimate, who dwelt in his small walnut bookcase, one of those quaintly contrived affairs containing a pictorial chart of civilization. Handles on either side served to wind this chart up, and history was most ingeniously depicted thereon. This amused him, but he knew his few volumes remarkably well, the Bible, Shakespeare, Gibbon, Homer, Plutarch, the Orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, and the complete works of Jefferson and Madison. He could look out from his windows across the gleaming little valley to which he had seen steam come, with all its entrained wonders.



MR. GROW AT EIGHTY-THREE, ON HIS VERANDA AT
GLENWOOD

Living thus, in quiet enjoyment, old age did not seem to grasp him until a few days before he died in 1907.

A retrospect of fifty years shows that his work has stood the test. The Homestead Law stands to-day as concentrated wisdom for the settlement of the domain. A few days after Mr. Grow's death General Nelson A. Miles said that when he represented the United States at the coronation of the present Czar of Russia he asked His Majesty what he intended to do with the lands of Siberia when the great railroad, then under construction, had been completed.

"We intend," replied His Majesty, "to do with it what your great statesman, Mr. Grow, did with the public domain of the United States. In due time we shall give it to the people, because we are convinced that the Homestead Law is the most useful enactment ever placed on the statute books of nations."

Up to June 30, 1913, there had been 977,467 entries, which took up in all 137,855,709 acres; and in that year alone ten million acres had gone to satisfy three thousand claims. The total amount is greater than any other item

of disposal except in grants to the States, and there remain unsurveyed and unappropriated nearly three hundred million acres exclusive of the lands which come under timber, mineral, forest, coal, or Indian classifications. To this should be added three hundred and sixty-seven million acres of Alaskan territory. Alaska will be settled under the Homestead Act, and the Secretary of the Interior recommends that terms be made easier. Had we desisted from grants to corporations and repealed the pre-emption laws long ago, the Homestead Act would have been still more valuable. It would have conserved us the domain in the best condition, and provided for a completely natural development without exploitation at the hands of railroads and speculators. As it is, however, the democratic effect has been amazingly far-reaching.

Industrially, to measure the effect of this act by agriculture, the backbone of our life, one has only to recall that in 1850 a little grain was sown broadcast and threshed to the "dull thunder of the alternating flail," while to-day in that vast territory which the Homestead Law gave to the landless is to be found the granary of the world, where agricultural ma-

chinery is doing the work of twenty million men. Hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat are grown; our corn crop in one year would cancel the interest-bearing debt of the country, pay the cost of the Panama Canal, and build a fleet of battleships; our hay crop alone would almost cancel the national debt; our dairy products would give every man, woman, and child in the United States thirty dollars per capita; while the total farm products each year would provide for every person in the country over ninety dollars.

When Mr. Grow first proclaimed that to the tillers of the soil should belong the soil, there was not enough money in circulation to get up a trust in the peanut crop, and the country was in nearly as bad condition financially as the man who invested all his fortune in a swampy town where they sold lots by the gallon. To-day, while most of the European nations "fill up their inkstands" when they begin to give a list of their debts, we find ourselves a nation of industrial and agricultural giants, possessing an aggregate wealth of one hundred and sixty thousand millions of dollars, producing eight tenths of the world's cotton and corn, one quarter of all its wheat, two fifths of

all its steel and iron, one third of all its coal, one fourth of all its meat, more gold and silver than any other country, and more manufactured products than England, France, and Germany combined.

Economically vital to us, socially it is certain that the heart of the nation would not be the same if this law had not been passed. We could not have answered the prayer of the vast yearning land: —

“Bring me men to match my mountains,
Bring me men to match my plains;
Men with empires in their purpose,
And new eras in their brains.
Pioneers to clear thoughts’ marshlands
And to cleanse old Error’s fens:
Bring me men to match my mountains —
Bring me men!”

Such men came. The law which gave them homes conserved to us a mighty land love which like a great dynamo drove the ploughs, built the towns and villages, gave stimulus to the railroads and later brought us nationally to reap marvels from that migration to which we were not only spiritually but practically sympathetic. Those who went to the land in that stream which “ripped and roared across the continent in record time,” gave us the

soundest value in citizenship, for the man upon the land best retains initiative; he escapes from the enmeshing slavery of mechanical industries. We have always leaned upon the immigrant, and this statute has been a boon to him. The middle class, directly benefited, prospered in ways consistent with true republican ideals. The Homestead Act was one which laid a wholesome base for the consolidation of men's force and therefore for our social superstructure.

Socially and politically this wise measure has proved a flag-bearer in a great procession of progressive experiments which have marked out the path of human advance. It redeemed the promise of the radical turn of the genius of the new Republic which distinguished it from the conservative, reasoned-rather-than-felt action of Old-World governments. Based on the idea that the people's property was best handled actually as private property, it entrenched individual rights in the common lands. Whether or no the ideal of social welfare shall change in regard to collectively owned resources in land and the institutions of private property ultimately become decadent, the law stands as indubitably the best

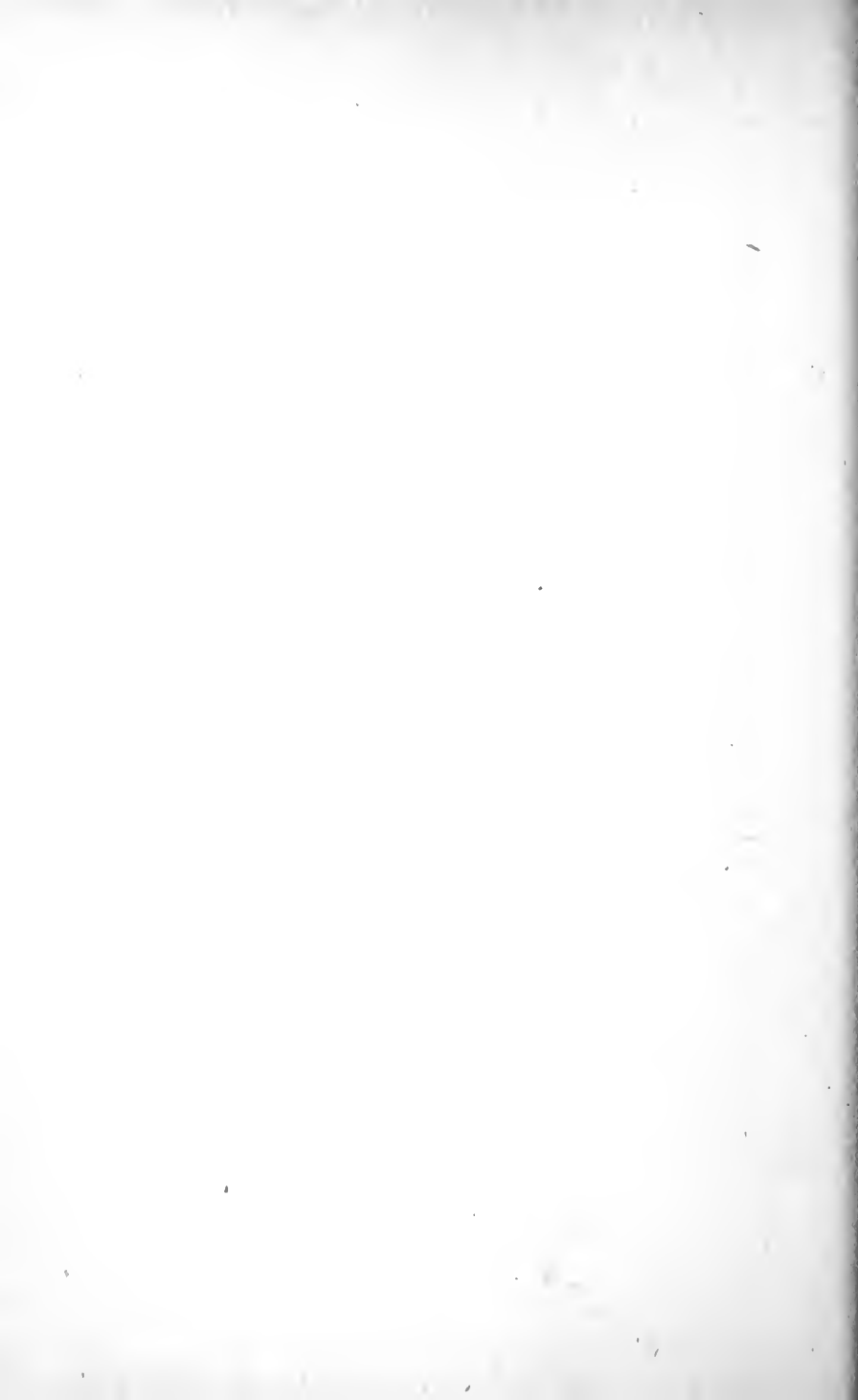
expression of its time, admirably suited to a social need.

Both human and political significance of land policy may be somewhat gauged by looking no farther than Mexico, our nextdoor neighbor, writhing in the throes of a war waged because statesmen failed to administer her domain as the estate of the people, encouraging a rank upgrowth of oppressive land monopoly, with peonage and slavery attendant. They wrestle with the soil and slavery problems coincidentally. We fortunately took slavery alone and handled the land problem constructively, undoubtedly saving our country from grave troubles and setting the world an example so tempting that Great Britain, for one, promptly followed suit with her Dominion Land Act of 1872, to secure the settlement of Canada on similar terms.

Galusha Grow was a vibrant part of the heart and intelligence of a great time. He helped to rouse our "Northern chivalry to resistance against the institutions which made merchandise of men." He directed our legislative procedure through two years of internecine war. With resolution and vigor he adhered to the simple fireside idea, the fine

land *motif* he received in his boyhood. With deep passion to satisfy a fundamental national need, Grow, a great agrarian, persisted until he assured to us our beautiful freefolk-land, which to-day still affords hospitality to him who feels compelling hearth-hunger. "The modest but firm demeanor he showed in exalted places, his manly endurance of political adversity, the contempt he displayed against all forms of political immorality," and the splendid faith in the purposes which sustained him make him tower above the aggregate. We have breathed his spirit deeply through our whole American life.

THE END



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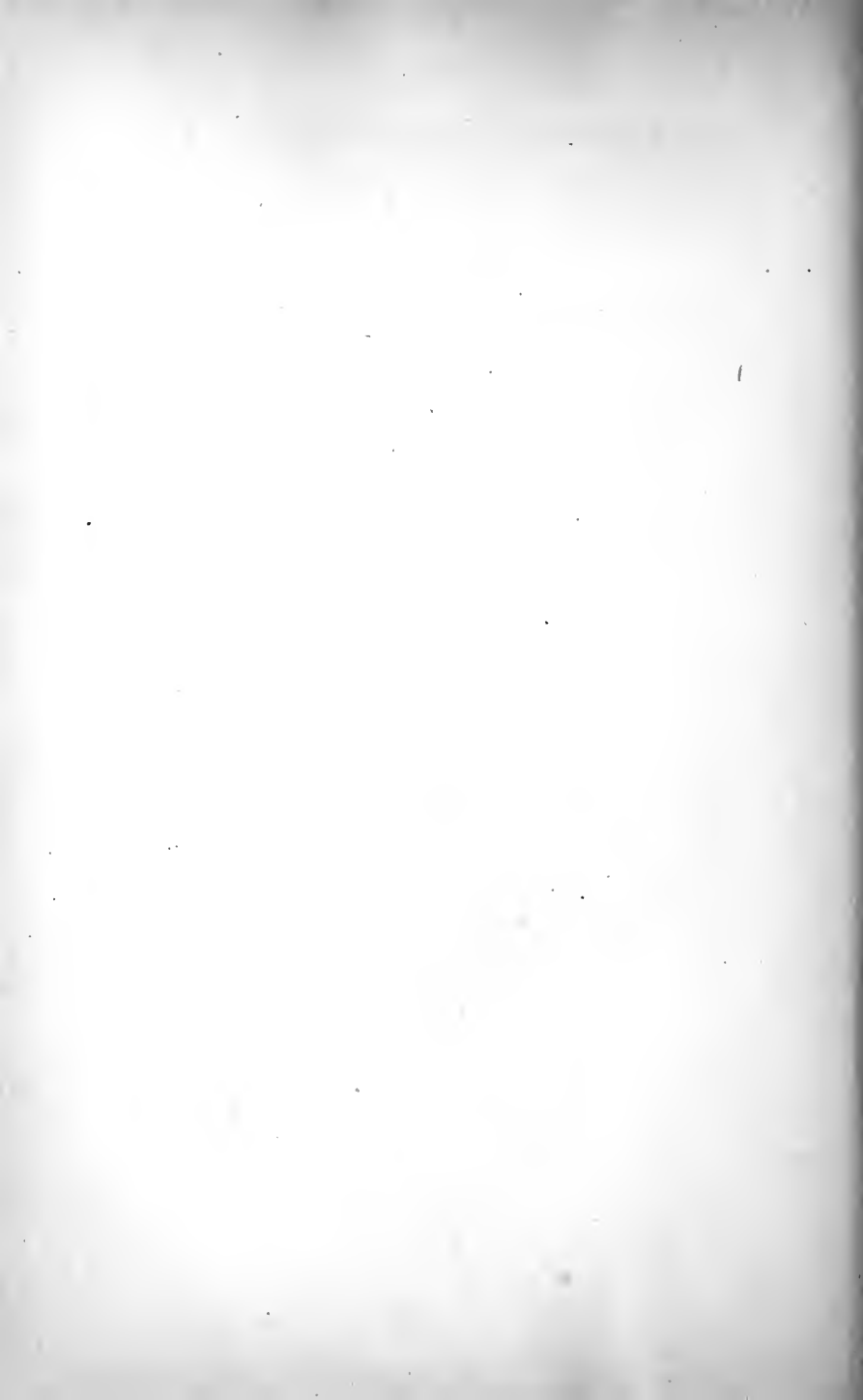
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